

In the Matter of:
Khazanie v University of North Carolina

Stephen Regan

February 14, 2023



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IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA

Civil Action No. 1:20-cv-01096

SUPRIYA KHAZANIE,)
)
Plaintiff,)
)
vs.)
)
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA)
AT CHAPEL HILL, UNC GILLINGS)
SCHOOL OF GLOBAL PUBLIC HEALTH,)
KATIE THORNSVARD, in her)
individual and official)
capacity as Associate Dean for)
Finance and Business,)
)
Defendants.)
)

VIDEO CONFERENCE DEPOSITION
OF
STEPHEN REGAN

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CHAPLIN AND ASSOCIATES, INC.
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MOORESVILLE, NC 28117

02-14-2023
11:06 O'CLOCK A.M.

Lori Gruber
Court Reporter

Chaplin & Associates
132 Joe Knox Ave, Suite 100-G
Mooreville, NC 28117
(704) 606-1434 | (336) 992-1954 | (919) 649-4444

REMOTE APPEARANCES

FOR THE PLAINTIFF SUPRIYA KHAZANIE:

Valerie L. Bateman, Esquire
NEW SOUTH LAW FIRM
209 Lloyd Street, Suite 350
Carrboro, NC 27510
valerie@newsouthlawfirm.com

**FOR THE DEFENDANTS THE UNIVERSITY OF
NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL, ET AL.:**

Kari R. Johnson, Esquire
Anne Phillips Martin, Esquire
Special Deputy Attorney General
NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE,
EDUCATION SECTION
P.O. Box 629
Raleigh, NC 27602
kjohnson@ncdoj.gov
ahphillips@northcarolina.edu

Kristen S. Lewis, Esquire
UNC - CH OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY COUNSEL
123 West Franklin Street, Suite 600A
Chapel Hill, NC 27599
kslewis@email.unc.edu

OTHER APPEARANCES

Anne Privett, UNC - CH Office of
University Counsel

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STIPULATIONS

Pursuant to Notice and/or consent of the parties, the deposition hereon captioned was conducted at the time and location indicated and was conducted before Lori Gruber, Notary Public in and for the County of Iredell, State of North Carolina at Large.

Notice and/or defect in Notice of time, place, purpose and method of taking the deposition was waived. Formalities with regard to sealing and filing the deposition were waived, and it is stipulated that the original transcript, upon being certified by the undersigned court reporter, shall be made available for use in accordance with the applicable rules as amended.

It is stipulated that objections to questions and motions to strike answers are reserved until the testimony, or any part thereof, is offered for evidence, except that objection to the form of any question shall be noted herein at the time of the taking of the testimony.

Reading and signing of the testimony was requested prior to the filing of same for use as permitted by applicable rule(s).

PROCEEDINGS

(11:06 o'clock a.m.)

THE COURT REPORTER: We are now on the record. Today's date is February 14th, 2023. The time is 11:06 a.m. I'll ask the attorneys to please introduce yourself and who you represent, and indicate for the record whether anyone else is present in the room with you. After that, I will place the witness under oath.

MS. BATEMAN: This is Valerie Bateman. I'm the attorney for the Plaintiff, Supriya Khazanie, and there's no one else in the room with me.

MS. JOHNSON: Kari Johnson. I'm an attorney on behalf of the Defendants in this case, and there's no one in the room with me.

MS. MARTIN: Hi, I'm Anne Martin, also representing Defendants in this case, and there is no one else in the room with me.

MS. LEWIS: Kristen Lewis with UNC Chapel Hill. No one in the room with me. But Anne Privett, my paralegal, is joining also remotely, so I don't know if she also needs to confirm no one is in the room with her.

THE COURT REPORTER: I'll just have her confirm just to be safe that no one's in the room with

1 you.

2 MS. PRIVETT: No one else is in the
3 room with me.

4 The witness, STEPHEN REGAN, being first duly
5 affirmed by me to state the truth, the whole truth,
6 and nothing but the truth, testifies as follows:

7 **EXAMINATION**

8 **BY MS. BATEMAN:**

9 Q. Good morning, Mr. Regan.

10 **A. Good morning.**

11 Q. Thank you for being here with us today. I
12 -- as I already said, I'm Valerie Bateman. Have you
13 ever had your deposition taken before?

14 **A. It's been several years.**

15 Q. Okay. But you remember the drill?

16 **A. I remember it pretty well.**

17 Q. All right. I'm going to be asking you
18 questions. You're going to be giving answers. I'm
19 trying to find out information about what you know.
20 If you have any questions or you need to take a break
21 at any time, I am fine with that. If you're in the
22 middle of a question, all I ask is that you finish
23 that question. Is that okay with you?

24 **A. Yes, it is.**

25 Q. Okay. Great. And at some point, you may

1 get objections from the lawyers on your side to my
2 questions. I would ask that you answer the question
3 unless they instruct you not to answer it.

4 That objection is sometimes a cue to you,
5 and it's just something lawyers do. I'm fine with
6 that, but I just need you to go ahead and answer the
7 question without, you know, taking an undue time to
8 stop and pause. Is that okay?

9 **A. Yes.**

10 Q. Okay.

11 MS. JOHNSON: I'm -- just again for the
12 record, going to object to her description of what my
13 objections -- the intention for my objections might
14 be.

15 Q. (Ms. Bateman) Okay. So Mr. Regan, I would
16 like to start with your history of employment at UNC.
17 Can you tell me a little bit about that?

18 **A. Yes. I was hired on February the 24th,**
19 **2014, and was employed with the University of North**
20 **Carolina Gillings School of Global Public Health for**
21 **my full tenure with them until I retired on August 1st**
22 **of 2020.**

23 Q. Okay. And how many years of service did you
24 have with UNC when you retired?

25 **A. Six years and five months.**

1 Q. And did you have prior state service?

2 A. I did not.

3 Q. Okay. And what did you do before you came
4 to the Gillings School?

5 A. Immediately before, or would you like a
6 overview?

7 Q. Well, it would be great if you give me an
8 overview. That'd be great.

9 A. Okay.

10 Q. How about in reverse chronological order, so
11 starting with what you did immediately prior to
12 Gillings.

13 A. Immediately prior to Gillings, I worked as a
14 human resource manager and volunteer relations manager
15 for an organization based in Boone, North Carolina,
16 called Samaritan's Purse, which is a non -- nonprofit
17 which was focused on the assistance of people going
18 through disaster relief both domestically and
19 internationally.

20 Q. And how long did you do that?

21 A. Nine-and-a-half years.

22 Q. Okay. And then before that?

23 A. Before that, I had worked with human
24 resources in Madison, Wisconsin for an ---

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. And I was the ---

2 Q. Go ahead.

3 A. That was a private industry called
4 Datex-Ohmeda, who specialized in medical equipment.
5 And I was a human resource manager, training manager
6 and labor relations manager for that organization. I
7 worked for them about five years.

8 Q. Okay. And prior to that?

9 A. Prior to that, I worked for a window
10 fenestration company in -- in Michigan. And I ---

11 Q. And were you doing ---

12 A. --- I was there for about five years as
13 their human resource manager.

14 Q. Okay. And prior to that?

15 A. Prior to that, I worked for a company called
16 Digital Equipment Corporation that specialized in
17 computer -- it was a computer hardware/software
18 company. And I ---

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. And I worked for them since -- let's see. I
21 worked for them from 1981 to 1994. And I had worked a
22 number of human resource positions, which included
23 staffing and recruiting, compensation, employee
24 relations and human resource manager.

25 Q. So how did you come to get the job at the

1 Gillings School?

2 A. I was looking -- I wanted to finish my
3 career in human resource management, a higher level
4 position which I was used to. And I didn't have that
5 at Samaritan's Purse. I saw that the Gillings School
6 was actually looking for -- well, what they called at
7 the time "a shared services manager."

8 And the job description as outlined online
9 indicated they were looking for an individual that
10 could actually pull the team of human resource
11 professionals together to provide service for the
12 school. I was quite interested in that.

13 Q. And so what did you do when you saw that
14 position posted?

15 A. I applied online.

16 Q. Okay. And you submitted your resume and I
17 guess a state application? Did you submit a state
18 application for that?

19 A. Well, I actually am trying to remember.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. Because I believe that that's accurate, but
22 I believe it -- it was all online. Yes, I did.

23 Q. Okay. So whatever the online process was,
24 you followed it?

25 A. That's correct.

1 Q. Okay. And at some point, were you
2 interviewed for the position?

3 A. Yes, I was.

4 Q. And who interviewed you?

5 A. Well, I was interviewed by a team of about
6 15 different people which consisted of -- would have
7 been the assistant dean for administration, a number
8 of the HR consultants. It would have consisted also
9 of department chairs and also for staff members that
10 were classified as business managers.

11 Q. And do you remember the names of any of
12 these people?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Would you -- would you please share them
15 with me?

16 A. Yeah, Janet Searce from the human resource
17 organization, Dr. Wolff who was the assistant vice
18 dean -- well, she was the assistant dean in charge of
19 administration.

20 I was trying to remember who the chairs
21 were. Dr. Michael Kosorok was involved. I'm trying
22 to remember the names of all the people that were
23 there.

24 Q. How about -- how about Barbara Rimer?

25 A. I -- I didn't interview with Dean Rimer. I

1 interviewed with the assistant dean who is a direct
2 report to Dean Rimer.

3 Q. And was that Dr. Wolff?

4 A. Yes, it was.

5 Q. All right. And was Dr. Wolff the
6 highest-ranking person you interviewed with?

7 A. I don't know about highest ranking --
8 department chairs are probably higher ranking.

9 Q. Oh, okay. So Dr. Kosorok was a department
10 chair?

11 A. That's correct.

12 Q. Okay. And who -- do you remember any of the
13 other department chairs?

14 A. Not offhand.

15 Q. All right. Well, probably from 2014, three
16 out -- four out of -- let's see. One, two, three.
17 Okay. Three out of 15, okay, that's not bad. If you
18 think of anybody else while we're talking, would you
19 -- would you add them to this list for me, please?

20 A. Yes, I will.

21 Q. Okay. Great. So you were hired in -- let's
22 see, I wrote this down. You were hired in February of
23 2014. And what was your position title?

24 A. I was hired as a shared services manager.

25 Q. And what does that mean, shared services

1 manager?

2 A. It was -- it was meant to be the human
3 resource manager for the school that would provide
4 direct supervision for all of the HR professionals
5 that worked within the school.

6 Shared services was meaning that it was
7 providing services across the school for eight
8 separate departments. So each one of those
9 departments would be getting human resource service,
10 whether it be compensation or benefits, employee
11 relations, consultation, training consultation.

12 It was -- they would come to that particular
13 department and they would share their resources from
14 the human resource team to obtain those services.

15 Q. Okay. So I think I understand from my
16 deposition with Janet Searce that she was assigned to
17 certain functions, let's say, within the Gillings
18 School.

19 And I believe that one of her -- one of her
20 functions was the finance department. Do you recall
21 what she was assigned to off the top of your head?

22 A. That would have been -- finance department
23 is part of a department that we called a central
24 administrative unit.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. So we had eight -- eight departments that
2 were part of, well, global public health, different
3 aspects of global public health. Then you had the
4 central administrative unit which was made up of IT,
5 finance, human resource management and student
6 services.

7 Janet would be the -- would have been
8 assigned, while I was there, as an HR consultant
9 supporting those particular parts of the central
10 administrative unit.

11 Q. Okay. Do you know if she supported any
12 other departments or just the central administrative
13 unit?

14 A. (No verbal response)

15 Q. Do you want me to ask that again, or are you
16 thinking?

17 A. No, I'm sorry. I'm -- I was thinking about
18 that. I was trying to remember who -- who was doing
19 what because we had eight different departments. And
20 we had nine people reporting to me. So I was trying
21 to remember ---

22 Q. Okay. Okay.

23 A. --- how that was divided up. I think the
24 central administrative unit -- and I also believe that
25 she was -- let me think, nutrition, right.

1 Q. Okay ---

2 A. She would've also provided support to the
3 nutrition department as well. Sorry I took so long.

4 Q. No, that's okay. I think she came from the
5 nutrition department, did she not?

6 A. She had provided services to the nutrition
7 department for quite some time.

8 Q. Okay. So let's -- let's talk about the
9 people who reported to you if we might.

10 A. Okay.

11 Q. Can you -- I think I remember Linda
12 Mitchell, okay, as one person. Do you -- do you
13 recall Linda Mitchell?

14 A. I do.

15 Q. Okay. And what did she do?

16 A. She was one of -- I had two lead
17 consultants. Basically, what we were doing was the
18 human resource team, we were working what I would call
19 a team-based system. And so she would have been one
20 of the HR team leaders.

21 And that way, she could provide support and
22 coaching and mentoring. She had more experience as
23 the senior HR consultant that would provide that
24 support for part of the team. So she was a team
25 leader.

1 Q. Okay. Team leader. Who was the other team
2 leader?

3 A. That would be Abbey McLennan.

4 Q. And are they still at the Gillings School?

5 A. To my knowledge, yes.

6 Q. Okay. And how did Linda and Abbey divide up
7 the other -- let's see, nine, two people reported to
8 you. That's two of them. So that leaves seven. How
9 did they divide up the supervision of the other seven
10 people, if they did?

11 A. Well, in concert with me when we met, we
12 looked through the different consultants and simply it
13 was more of like a 50/50 split trying to make sure
14 that the work was divided evenly between them.

15 Q. So I take from that that some departments
16 were more needy than others.

17 A. Well, I'm not sure what you mean by "needy."

18 Q. Well, did you just split the departments in
19 half? I mean there are eight departments. Did you
20 just give four to Abbey and four to Linda and then let
21 them spread it out among the consultants?

22 A. No. We -- we identified each department and
23 each consultant, and then we split them 50/50. So
24 they were assigned consultants that way.

25 Q. Okay. So who were the -- if you recall, who

1 were the other seven people other than Abbey and Linda
2 -- other -- and Janet? So there's six more I'm
3 looking for.

4 A. Well, we had a specialist called -- and her
5 name was LaSonya Whitworth.

6 Q. Can you spell that for me?

7 A. Lasonya is L-a-S-o-n-y-a. Whitworth is
8 W-h-i-t-w-o-r-t-h.

9 Q. Okay. And why was she called a specialist?

10 A. Her classification of her position wouldn't
11 have been as high a level. So she would be a -- more
12 of an entry-level HR professional.

13 But she would also specialize primarily in
14 issues of international visas for the school because
15 we -- we had a number of international students that
16 would -- well, that would study with the school. And
17 some of them would work within the school as well.

18 So we had to work with the university
19 international services to make sure that all of their
20 visas and everything was administered properly and
21 legally. And so that was primarily LaSonya's focus.

22 Q. Okay. So that would be, then, let's see,
23 nine, seven, six. So that means maybe there are six
24 consultants and the specialist, LaSonya. Is that
25 right?

1 A. Six -- six consultants, the specialist and
2 two lead consultants.

3 Q. Got it. And the two lead consultants were
4 Abbey and Linda?

5 A. Correct, uh-huh.

6 Q. Okay. So who were -- besides Janet, who
7 were the other five consultants?

8 A. One of them would have been Melissa. That's
9 M-e-l-i-s-s-a. Halstead, that's H-a-l-s-t-e-a-d.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. Annette Raines. That'd be A-n-n-e-t-t-e is
12 Annette. Raines is R-a-i-n-e-s.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. Caitlin Webster would have been a
15 consultant. It's C-a-i-t-l-y-n (sic), Caitlin.
16 Webster, W-e-b-s-t-e-r.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. Karen Capps. That would be K-a-r-e-n,
19 Karen. Capps is C-a-p-p-s. That's P as in Paul,
20 p-p-s.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. I should mention that there was one
23 consultant that retired during my tenure as well. Her
24 name was Vera Bennett. That's V-e-r-a. And then
25 Bennett is B as in Baker, e-n-n-e-t-t. Like I said,

1 she retired.

2 Q. Do you recall when she retired?

3 A. A couple of years before I did. That's why
4 we hired Caitlin Webster to replace her.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. And then Sharon Sullivan. Sharon is
7 S-h-a-r-o-n. Sullivan, S-u-l-l-i-v-a-n. I think I
8 covered everybody. I'm not sure.

9 Q. I think you did. One, two, three, four,
10 five. Yeah. So Vera and Caitlin were in the same
11 position. And Caitlin came in and replaced Vera. So
12 were all of these individuals at -- still working when
13 you retired?

14 A. Except for Vera.

15 Q. Okay. And do you know ---

16 A. All of them, yes. Yeah.

17 Q. And do you know if they're still there now?

18 A. I believe they are all there now. As far as
19 I know, yes.

20 Q. And do you know who replaced you?

21 A. I should, but I don't remember her name. I
22 did not meet her. I was told that she came from the
23 -- the school of medicine, I believe. I can't -- I
24 don't know what her name is.

25 Q. Okay. That's okay. And you retired during

1 the pandemic. Let's see, I believe you said in
2 August?

3 A. Yeah. My retirement date was August 1st.

4 Q. Okay. So during your tenure at the Gillings
5 School between February 2014 and August 2020, did you
6 have the occasion to conduct any HR investigations?

7 A. I did.

8 Q. And how many would you say you conducted?

9 A. Well, if we define HR investigations -- how
10 are you defining HR investigations?

11 Q. Well, somebody makes a complaint about
12 something, and it comes to HR, and -- and somebody
13 says, "You need to do an investigation so we can
14 decide what to do about this."

15 A. Yeah. Probably at least a half dozen times
16 I had to do that.

17 Q. Okay. And did you do it yourself, or did
18 you assign it to someone?

19 A. Depending on what the matter would be.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. I would ---

22 Q. So -- go ahead.

23 A. I'm sorry. Depending on what the matter
24 would be, sometimes I would have lead consultants
25 involved in the investigation as well based on their

1 **knowledge and based -- like I said, it depends on the**
2 **situation, of course.**

3 Q. Okay. Well, of this half dozen, and I know
4 that's an estimate so I'm not going to hold you to it.
5 You know, if it turns out to be more or less, that's
6 fine. But do you recall any that you did personally?

7 **A. Yeah.**

8 Q. Okay. Can you tell me how many?

9 **A. At least four.**

10 Q. And so that means that of the approximately
11 six, you did, I'd say at least four of them. And then
12 would you have assigned the others to either Linda or
13 Abbey?

14 **A. I wouldn't have assigned it directly. I**
15 **still would have been involved with it, but they would**
16 **have been -- they would have assisted me with it.**

17 Q. Okay. So you were personally involved in
18 all of them, but there were some that you were the
19 only person involved?

20 **A. That's true.**

21 Q. And is that the four that you were talking
22 about?

23 **A. That I was personally involved?**

24 Q. That you were the only person personally
25 involved?

1 **A. Only person as the investigator?**

2 Q. Well, here's what I'm trying to figure out.
3 You said of the four, you -- I said, "How many of them
4 did you do personally?"

5 And you said, "Well, at least four."

6 And then I was asking you, "Well, who would
7 have done the other ones?"

8 And you said -- well, you would have been
9 involved, but they would have assisted you with them.

10 So what I'm trying to figure out now is of
11 the four that you were personally involved with, were
12 you the only person involved with it?

13 **A. Are you saying -- I'm sorry. I'm sorry that**
14 **I'm not clear. But if you ask me if I'm the only**
15 **person involved with it, there are other persons**
16 **involved in investigations besides myself.**

17 If you're asking me as -- I guess I'm not
18 clear really what you're asking me. And I'm not
19 trying to be difficult, believe me.

20 Q. No. No. No. And I'm not trying to be
21 unclear, so -- I'm trying to go back -- so there were
22 about a half dozen investigations that you did
23 yourself or oversaw while you were there. Is that
24 true?

25 **A. Yes. At least.**

1 Q. Okay. Can you -- can you tell me how to
2 distinguish your involvement in those six
3 investigations? Like, did you do them all yourself?
4 Did you always work on somebody else with them? I'm
5 just trying to understand how those investigations
6 came to occur.

7 A. Well, generally, the way an investigation
8 came -- as you said would come to occur, would be
9 through a concern or a complaint that would come
10 either through one of the consultants, or a person
11 could come directly to my office, either directly or
12 send me an email or -- or give me a phone call.

13 Depending on what that complaint or
14 depending on what that concern would be, I would then
15 make a determination of who should be involved in --
16 in following up with that concern.

17 Now, because there's different types of
18 concerns, there wouldn't always be an -- you know,
19 it's pretty hard to say that I would do it the exact
20 way every time, nor would I have the same people
21 involved every time.

22 It would depend very specifically on what --
23 what was being -- what was being reported to me. Does
24 that make sense?

25 Q. It does make sense. That's -- that's very

1 helpful.

2 So I want to go back to an investigation
3 that Barbara Rimer discussed during her deposition.
4 She said at one point, some -- an employee came to her
5 and said, "Well, I don't think you're going to do
6 anything about this, but here's what happened to me."

7 And Barbara was very concerned, and she went
8 to you, and an investigation was done. And she said
9 -- and someone was eventually terminated. So do you
10 recall that ---

11 MS. JOHNSON: I'm going to object.
12 Also -- I'm going to object for the record. But also,
13 just as we did in Barbara Rimer's deposition, I'm
14 going to instruct the witness to answer, but to do so
15 without personally identifying any employees because
16 we don't have the right to that in this deposition
17 setting. So...

18 MS. BATEMAN: Okay. Well, I am -- I am
19 going to -- I am going to ask the witness to
20 personally identify it because we do have a protective
21 order in place and we can seal this deposition if you
22 want. We can refer to people by initials if you want,
23 but I want -- I want to get specific details about
24 each of these investigations.

25 So I don't know if you want to -- I mean, I

1 can hold the deposition open pending a resolution of
2 the issue by the Court, or we can come to some
3 compromise during the deposition about how Mr. Regan
4 can refer to people. I'm open to suggestions.

5 MS. JOHNSON: Valerie, why don't we do
6 it this way? Why don't you let him answer without
7 personally identifying him so we can keep the
8 deposition rolling? And then when we take our first
9 break, I will consult and see if there's anything
10 further in terms of more specific identification that
11 he can provide.

12 MS. BATEMAN: Okay. All right.

13 MS. JOHNSON: And we'll just go from
14 there.

15 MS. BATEMAN: That's fine. That's
16 fine.

17 MS. JOHNSON: Thank you.

18 Q. (Ms. Bateman) Okay. So Mr. Regan, do you
19 recall this investigation that I just described to
20 you?

21 **A. Can you repeat it, please?**

22 Q. Yes. Yes. Someone went to Dean Rimer and
23 made a complaint. And Dean Rimer was concerned enough
24 that she came to you and asked you -- or told you
25 about it, and then she either directed you to do an

1 investigation or you decided to do an investigation.

2 But the outcome of that investigation was
3 that someone was terminated. And I think it had to do
4 with bullying.

5 MS. JOHNSON: I'm going to object. But
6 you can answer, Mr. Regan, to the extent -- again,
7 just don't personally identify employees -- to the
8 extent that you can answer her question.

9 THE WITNESS: Well, that's what I'm
10 struggling with. As you described it, I cannot
11 remember a case where that happened like that.

12 Q. (Ms. Bateman) So you don't recall anybody
13 being terminated as a result of one of your
14 investigations?

15 A. I didn't say that.

16 Q. All right. Well, let's say -- let's start
17 there, then, and work backwards.

18 A. Okay.

19 Q. Of this half a dozen or so investigations
20 that you conducted, was the outcome of any of them
21 that someone was terminated?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Okay. Can you tell me more about -- how
24 many?

25 A. When you say, "terminated," as in the

1 university made the decision that they could no longer
2 work at the university, or that they resigned ---

3 Q. Either one.

4 A. --- voluntarily?

5 Q. Either one.

6 A. Either one? Well, I can think of three.

7 Q. And what -- what happened in the other three
8 or so investigations? The ones ---

9 MS. JOHNSON: Objection. Same
10 instruction as before.

11 THE WITNESS: I'm not sure what you're
12 asking right there.

13 Q. (Ms. Bateman) So -- yeah, so in -- in the
14 approximately half dozen investigations that occurred
15 while you were at the Gillings School, in about half
16 of them, three of them, you recall an employee either
17 resigned or was terminated as a result of the
18 investigation. In the other three, what was the
19 outcome?

20 A. If -- if they weren't -- well, I can think
21 of one where there were letters of reprimand written
22 and placed in files.

23 Q. All right. And then what about in the other
24 two?

25 A. Where are we on the count? So which two are

1 we talking about?

2 Q. So three -- that's okay. Three resulted in
3 either termination or resignation, one resulted in
4 letters of reprimand. That leaves two more.

5 A. Yeah. The investigations that I'm thinking
6 about would have been written reprimands.

7 Q. So in all three of those remaining ones
8 there were letters of written reprimand?

9 A. To my recollection, yes.

10 Q. Okay. And so in the three in which the
11 employees left either by voluntary resignation or
12 termination, do you recall how many were terminated
13 and how many resigned?

14 A. To my recollection, I believe two were
15 terminated and one resigned.

16 Q. Okay. And what were the -- okay. In the
17 one -- in the two that were terminated, what level
18 position was this?

19 A. One was faculty and one was a business
20 manager.

21 Q. Okay. And the resignation, what level
22 position was that?

23 A. Professional staff.

24 Q. And what does that mean if you -- if you
25 could ---

1 A. Well, they weren't -- they weren't faculty
2 and they weren't classified as a business manager. So
3 they would have had a particular expertise.
4 Professional staff is -- I'm trying to figure out how
5 to explain that.

6 There are certain positions with the state
7 that are subject to personnel law. And there's
8 certain positions with the state that are exempt from
9 personnel law, which means, you know, are you going to
10 pay them overtime? Are you not going to pay them
11 overtime? Do they have certain benefits versus --
12 that's how they would distinguish. And there are
13 other ways to distinguish.

14 So the person that I'm referring to in this
15 particular case would have been exempt from the
16 personnel law. It's classified as EPA in compensation
17 and benefits at the Office of Human Resource
18 Management.

19 Q. Okay. And then the faculty person was also
20 exempt, correct?

21 A. That would be true, yes.

22 Q. Okay. What about the business manager?

23 A. Yeah, I'm thinking about that because some
24 of the business managers -- we have examples of both.
25 And I'm not sure. I'm not totally sure how that

1 person was classified, whether it was exempt or
2 whether it was subject to the personnel law for North
3 Carolina.

4 Q. Okay. And so do you have -- like, in the
5 investigations, in the three investigations where
6 there were letters of reprimand written and placed in
7 the file, do you recall whether these were exempt or
8 subject to the human resources act?

9 A. There would have been both.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. One would -- one would be faculty. And I
12 think the -- I think -- you know, I'm not totally sure
13 how they were classified, but I -- yeah. I would be
14 guessing, so...

15 Q. Okay. So you ---

16 A. You would have to check.

17 Q. Okay. And those other three investigations,
18 then, one was faculty, and they would have been
19 exempt, right? And then you don't recall about the
20 other two. Is that right?

21 A. Yeah. Because it could have been either
22 one. Or I know that we had -- I know that I had
23 worked some where they were processed and some were
24 non-exempt, or they were SPA, I guess you would say.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. I can't remember for sure every single one
2 of those because I -- I believe that at least one
3 would have been classified as EPA.

4 Q. So without matching a position to an
5 allegation, but tell me, generally, about these six --
6 the six investigations. What were the allegations in
7 each one?

8 MS. JOHNSON: I'm going to object. But
9 same instruction. You can answer, Mr. Regan, but
10 without identifying employees. Thank you.

11 THE WITNESS: Yeah. And I'm not -- I'm
12 not comfortable in answering the question without
13 having case files in front of me because I'm -- I'm
14 very concerned about -- well, I guess I'm -- I don't
15 really want to speculate and I don't want to go from
16 memory because I've -- I've been gone from the office
17 for two-and-a-half years.

18 And some of these cases date back a number
19 of years. So to be fair, I -- I don't want to try to
20 speculate on the cases without having case notes. And
21 I don't have the case notes.

22 Q. (Ms. Bateman) Okay. So do you have any
23 recollection at all about any of the investigations
24 that you conducted, what you were looking at, what the
25 allegations were?

1 MS. JOHNSON: I'm going to object based
2 upon his prior testimony that he would be speculating.
3 But you can answer her question if you can.

4 Q. (Ms. Bateman) Okay. Do you recall any
5 allegations? Like, were there sexual harassment?
6 Were they -- were they -- I'm assuming that they all
7 involved misconduct as opposed to performance. Is
8 that true?

9 A. Well, again, unless I have the case files in
10 front of me, I don't want to make a statement about
11 what people were accused of or anything like that. As
12 I said, I don't want to go from memory and
13 speculation.

14 I'm used to having case files in front of me
15 if I'm going to talk about a case, and I don't have
16 them. I don't have the case file.

17 Q. Okay. So is it your testimony you don't
18 recall for the three employees who two were terminated
19 and one resigned, you have -- you have no recollection
20 at all about what the allegations were in those cases
21 that resulted in their leaving university employment?

22 MS. JOHNSON: Objection.

23 THE WITNESS: And my -- I'd give the
24 same answer on those. I -- I do recall people being
25 terminated. But again, I'm not comfortable talking

1 **about their individual cases without having case**
2 **notes. And I don't have them.**

3 Q. (Ms. Bateman) Yeah, I understand that
4 you're not comfortable talking about it. But I guess
5 my question is -- I'm not asking you to give me any
6 specific matching it up with any particular people.
7 I'm asking you just to tell me basically the nature of
8 the investigation.

9 What generally -- this is not calling for
10 any speculation. I'm just asking you to recall the
11 reasons people left employment.

12 MS. JOHNSON: Objection based upon his
13 testimony that he would need to see the case files.
14 You can answer, though, if you can, Mr. Regan.

15 **THE WITNESS: Yeah. I would give you**
16 **-- I would give the same answer. I'd be happy to**
17 **discuss the cases and the investigations if I could**
18 **have the case file in front of me. I don't have them.**
19 **And so I'm not comfortable. I'm not interested in**
20 **trying to speculate and go from memory on those case**
21 **files. I'm just not ---**

22 Q. (Ms. Bateman) Yeah. I just want to know
23 what your best recollection is of the reasons people
24 were terminated.

25 MS. JOHNSON: Objection. Same

1 objection. And also, now, asked and answered is
2 another objection.

3 MS. BATEMAN: Okay. Well, I'm just
4 going to -- I'll have to do a Motion to Compel on
5 this. That's okay. So I'm going to leave this just
6 in interest of moving along.

7 Q. (Ms. Bateman) And I'm going to ask you if
8 you ever recall at some point in time, the Plaintiff
9 in this case, Supriya Khazanie, coming to you and
10 making a complaint about Katie Thornsvarð?

11 A. The only time that I recall Supriya Khazanie
12 making a complaint about Katie Thornsvarð was on her
13 last day of employment when we were processing her
14 exit from UNC.

15 Q. Okay. So I am going to show you a document.

16 A. Okay.

17 MS. JOHNSON: Valerie, if you need a
18 second to get that document up, would this be a good
19 time to take a restroom break?

20 MS. BATEMAN: Sure. I don't really
21 need any time to get it up. I can just share my
22 screen right now. But if you want to take a break,
23 I'm fine with that.

24 MS. JOHNSON: No. No. I can wait a --
25 I can wait a little while. Go ahead and continue.

1 MS. BATEMAN: Okay. All right. So I
2 am just going to ask if I can get control, if I can
3 share my screen. Can I do that?

4 THE COURT REPORTER: You should be able
5 to do that. On the bottom of your screen ---

6 MS. BATEMAN: Got it.

7 THE COURT REPORTER: --- at the bottom,
8 it should say "Share Screen." Or if it doesn't, the
9 -- there you go.

10 MS. BATEMAN: Got it. Great.

11 Q. (Ms. Bateman) Okay. Mr. Regan, can you see
12 that screen?

13 **A. Now I can, yes.**

14 Q. Okay. Great. So I'm going to move down in
15 this screen. This is a document we've marked, and I
16 can't tell you exactly what we've marked it.

17 But it's a -- it's a charge of
18 discrimination that Ms. Khazanie filed. Have you ever
19 reviewed that document? Does this look at all
20 familiar to you?

21 **A. It does look familiar, yeah.**

22 Q. Okay. So do you see this paragraph that
23 says, "Around the beginning of November 2019"?

24 **A. Yes.**

25 Q. Okay. It says, "I also talked to Steve --

1 Stephen (Steve) Regan the Dean for human resources."

2 So do you deny that you talked to Ms.
3 Khazanie around the beginning of November 2019?

4 A. About what that paragraph says?

5 Q. Yes, that she felt bullied by her
6 supervisor.

7 A. Well, that's the -- okay. When that was --
8 that's the same paragraph or a similar paragraph that
9 was shown to me when she -- when she filed an appeal
10 with employee management relations after her
11 employment was terminated.

12 And in that ---

13 Q. Right.

14 A. -- in that one, she said -- it didn't say
15 that. It said November 1st because I remember -- I
16 remember this because it jumped out at me. The
17 paragraph jumped out at me because, in her original
18 comment, she had indicated on November 1st. It didn't
19 say, "Around the beginning of November 2019."

20 Regardless, I have no recollection of this
21 conversation ever happening.

22 But in the original document that I saw on
23 November 1st, I -- I explained to the people that were
24 asking me questions about it then, it couldn't have
25 happened because I wasn't even in the state when she

1 **said that conversation happened. So no, I have no**
2 **recollection of that conversation at all.**

3 Q. Okay. And you don't recall telling her to
4 go talk to Katie about her concerns?

5 **A. No.**

6 Q. Okay. So let's -- I'm going to -- I'm
7 looking for -- let's see. So in the next paragraph,
8 it says, "The next week I went to Katie's office to
9 talk to her as Steve advised."

10 Do you see that paragraph?

11 **A. I see that.**

12 Q. Okay. And it says, "I told Katie how much
13 her comments about my wearing my hair down when
14 interacting with male colleagues had bothered me and
15 how self-conscious they made me."

16 Do you see that?

17 **A. I see that.**

18 Q. Okay. And then the next sentence says, "She
19 told me 'oh, you know I self-reported that comment to
20 Steve when I said it.'"

21 Do you recall Katie coming to you and,
22 quote, "self-reporting" that she made a comment to
23 Supriya?

24 **A. I do.**

25 Q. Okay. Can you tell me more about that?

1 A. Can I tell you more about?

2 Q. Yeah. What did -- what did Katie come to
3 you and say?

4 A. It was in the -- okay. Well, let me put it
5 in context. Katie had come to my office because she
6 was concerned. She was asking me questions of how to
7 address a situation that she was having with Supriya.

8 Because she was asking for counsel because
9 other employees had been coming to her and reporting
10 that Supriya had been making comments that they felt
11 was inappropriate and -- and were offensive.

12 Katie was concerned and trying to seek
13 counsel on this because the employees that were
14 reporting it were not giving her specifics. So she
15 wanted to know how to sit down with an employee to
16 address a concern like that when she can't tell the
17 employee exactly what was being said.

18 So what we ended up doing during those
19 conversations -- because Katie said there was more
20 than one and, you know, there were comments that were
21 offensive. But she was concerned that maybe Supriya
22 did not understand the impact that she was having on
23 people.

24 And that's -- that's where the thought
25 process came from around addressing an issue which we

1 -- we called "EQ and EI," emotional quotient and
2 emotional intelligence, to help employees understand
3 that -- how their words impact the working environment
4 and to try to help her along those lines so that it
5 wouldn't interfere with her career.

6 All of that happened there in -- she was
7 also trying to address issues with Supriya about time
8 management because -- what she was saying is, Supriya
9 -- you know, she's getting complaints from other
10 managers about Supriya spending too much time within
11 their departments talking to employees that they're
12 responsible for. So they're afraid that that's going
13 to inhibit the work production that they're involved
14 in.

15 Now, one of the groups that was identified
16 in that was the IT support group that was down the
17 hall from Supriya's office. Now, one of the HR
18 consultants I mentioned to you, Caitlin Webster, her
19 office was right across the hall from that area.

20 So what I elected to do -- Linda Mitchell
21 was the lead consultant that would be assisting
22 Caitlin. We had a system in our HR team that I would
23 meet with the HR consultants officially in a meeting
24 with the lead one time per week, every week.

25 And so part of that meeting that happened

1 with Caitlin, I brought up the conversation saying
2 that, "It's come to my attention that you have been
3 identified" -- saying to Caitlin that she had been
4 identified as one of the people that Supriya would
5 come and spend an exorbitant amount of time talking.

6 And I asked Caitlin about that. And Caitlin
7 advised that she does come to her office. And I asked
8 her about -- "Does she come to the IT department?"

9 She said, "Yes, she does."

10 And during that session, I'd asked her, "Was
11 there an HR reason for the meeting? Was there any
12 complaint or was anything said that was a concern?"

13 During that meeting, Caitlin advised me that
14 a statement had been made to her from one of her
15 colleagues in the finance department when discussing
16 diversity.

17 As -- as I recall it, the comment was along
18 the lines of Katie asking the team what they -- you
19 know, what they were working towards or what they were
20 doing towards diversity. Because diversity and
21 inclusion was one of the main goals and focuses on the
22 school of public health.

23 And so every department would have -- want
24 to be able to make a statement of what they're doing
25 to help promote diversity and inclusion within the

1 school.

2 So one of Supriya's colleagues, according to
3 Caitlin, made a comment that they hired Supriya. And
4 Supriya was telling Caitlin that that upset her. And
5 Caitlin said that she -- as I recall it, Caitlin was
6 giving advice on how to address the situation.

7 She was -- which would have included going,
8 potentially, and talking to Janet Searce, who's the
9 -- again, the consultant that was partnered with the
10 finance team.

11 And she said that she advised her -- did she
12 say anything to the colleague? I think her colleague
13 was -- I believe it was Teri Smith that had made that
14 comment, which is one of the finance people in that
15 finance suite.

16 So I asked her how that ended up. She said
17 that the next day she was advised that Supriya had
18 advised her that Teri had apologized and also
19 apologized in front of the rest of the team in -- in a
20 team meeting.

21 So all of that to say, as I recall the
22 original question, Katie had come to me asking counsel
23 on how to have these conversations. And I advised her
24 that there are people that we can talk to within the
25 university that can also advise counsel on difficult

1 situations like that, which included our
2 organizational development consultant Will Frey out of
3 the office of human resources.

4 Brandon Washington who was the vice provost,
5 I believe, over at EOC at the time. And also, there's
6 some very good people within the EOC organization.
7 Rebecca Gibson's name came up.

8 And so that -- at that point in time, I had
9 given counsel to Katie to talk to Rebecca and that I
10 would take the action either of getting a hold of
11 Brandon and Will Frey to get counsel around can we
12 provide some guidance and support for Supriya,
13 especially around potential issues of EQ and EI.

14 Q. And tell me again what "Q" is. An
15 emotional?

16 A. Emotional quotient. Basically, what that's
17 doing is helping a -- it's basically a process to go
18 through and similar to questionnaires that you would
19 take, like a Meyers-Briggs-type questionnaire, which
20 would measure a person's adequacy to help them assess
21 their own self-awareness, their own empathy.

22 You know, how are they dealing with other
23 employees, other people? Are they dealing with
24 sensitivity with other people? All of which would
25 assist her, and any employee, in working and helping

1 to promote a positive work environment.

2 So that was the type of support that we
3 decided to do. None of the managers -- Katie had -- I
4 remember Katie saying to me that she didn't think any
5 of the managers thought that Supriya was saying these
6 things out of maliciousness or trying to violate
7 policies, that they thought that she just isn't aware
8 of the impact that she's having when she's making some
9 of these comments.

10 And that's where the idea of the EI and EQ
11 actually came from.

12 Q. And so what ever came of that?

13 A. Will Frey and I had the conversation, and
14 they were able to identify actual -- I guess you'd
15 call them courses, that were offered by the
16 university. And I believe it was in concert with our
17 employee assistance program, the people that provide
18 employee assistance programs for the university.

19 And ---

20 Q. And did -- go ahead.

21 A. And I got that information basically the --
22 I think the schedule of the course -- actually, the
23 schedule of the courses -- the way the employees sign
24 up for courses like that, they can do that online.
25 University has a system that they call

1 ConnectCarolina, and several different programs are
2 part of that ConnectCarolina where an employee can
3 actually log on and apply to schedule a course like
4 that.

5 To my recollection, Supriya did that. And
6 to my recollection -- I know for a fact she went to
7 it. Because when she came back afterwards, she did
8 come to my office then and talked to me about the
9 course because I was interested in how it went, too.

10 Q. Okay. And what was the course called?

11 A. Not totally sure. I -- I thought it was --
12 I -- again, I don't have that in front of me so I
13 don't know the exact name of the course. I'm sorry.

14 Q. So what do you recall of the conversation
15 you had with her after she went to this course? What
16 did she tell you?

17 A. She told me it was a total waste of her
18 time.

19 Q. Okay. And did she tell you any more about
20 why it was a waste of her time?

21 A. I remember her saying that this kind of
22 stuff is for -- I don't know if she used the word
23 "stuff," by the way. To the best of my recollection,
24 she said, "That is more geared toward entry-level
25 employees. It's a waste of my time."

1 I remember talking to her about that, and I
2 said, "Well, one of the reasons that we don't feel
3 it's a waste of anybody's time is because it's very
4 important that all of us understand the impact that
5 we're having with people in general, but people that
6 we work with."

7 If we want -- want to be -- especially if we
8 want to perform at a higher-level position, that we
9 are thought of as people that have a lot of influence
10 on -- on employees. And we also represent the School
11 of Global Public Health. So in that sense, I was
12 saying it shouldn't be thought of as a waste of time.

13 That was pretty much it.

14 Q. Okay. And you -- and your testimony is that
15 you don't recall Supriya ever complaining to you about
16 Katie making a remark to her about wearing her hair
17 down?

18 A. Supriya never made that comment to me until
19 her exit interview. Katie made the comment to me.

20 Q. Katie told you about it ahead of time?

21 A. Katie told me that in one of the
22 conversations -- that was the original question. I'm
23 sorry. The original question that you had asked, when
24 I was telling you about Katie coming and talking to me
25 about that ---

1 Q. Yeah.

2 A. --- she said that in one of her conversation
3 -- Katie said, as I recall, in one of her
4 conversations in attempting to coach and counsel
5 Supriya around the perception that she's having,
6 which, you know, that's why we're talking about all
7 the -- the complaints or the words that are being used
8 with other employees, that she also made a comment
9 about touching her hair in -- in some of the staff --
10 in some of the meetings that she's having, I think she
11 said, with chairs, as I recall.

12 And I remember saying, "Why did you say
13 that?" And she said she was trying to just make her
14 aware of the impact along the same context as trying
15 to help her be as professional as she can, have the
16 appropriate impact. Again, with the EQ, EI and being
17 self-aware.

18 I said, "Well, Katie, how did that go? Or
19 how did she respond?"

20 She said -- as I recall Katie saying that
21 she didn't agree with her, and she could tell that,
22 you know, that she wasn't accepting that kind of
23 feedback.

24 So I told her, "Well, don't make that kind
25 of comment because it's clearly not having the impact

1 that you're hoping it would. And it's clearly, you
2 know, not being helpful for what we're trying to do
3 here on behalf of Supriya."

4 And then Katie advised that she included
5 that -- when she went to see Rebecca Gibson at EOC,
6 that she had also talked to Rebecca Gibson about
7 making that comment as well. So ---

8 Q. Do you know -- go ahead.

9 A. So she was -- so she was saying that she
10 self-reported to EOC. She made -- it's the only time
11 -- I remember telling the EOC department. I remember
12 telling Brandon, I said, "In the six-and-a-half -- you
13 know, the six years that I've been around -- actually,
14 in the 30 years that I've been around, I've never had
15 a manager come into my office and tell me that they
16 messed up, said the wrong thing or said it in a way
17 that they wished they hadn't said it."

18 I've never had anybody do that. And I never
19 had anybody then go and talk to EOC on their own
20 behalf without being somewhat compelled to do so. So
21 that's why that's very memorable. Never had that
22 happen before.

23 Q. So I thought Rebecca Gibson had been
24 identified as someone that might be a resource to
25 Supriya.

1 A. Well, she would be a resource to Supriya.

2 Q. So do you ---

3 A. She'd be a resource to any of the employees,
4 but she was ---

5 Q. Right. But your testimony is that Katie
6 went and talked to Rebecca?

7 A. That is what I recall, yes.

8 Q. Okay. So do you know if Supriya was ever
9 referred to Rebecca?

10 A. Not by me. Supriya was referred to the EOC
11 organization. Rebecca's not the only person that
12 works at EOC. But Supriya had been involved in other
13 EOC cases while she was an employee at UNC, both as an
14 employee where a EOC report was filed on her behalf
15 and also an EOC employee -- an EOC report that was
16 filed where she was identified as a person violating
17 policy.

18 Q. Okay. Well, tell me more about that. Tell
19 me more about the one where she was accused of
20 violating policy.

21 A. Well, as I had indicated before, she had
22 spent an -- she -- managers had been coming --
23 managers -- you're going to ask me what managers.
24 Specifically, the IT -- the associate -- the associate
25 dean for IT and the associate dean for student

1 services had both approached Katie indicating that the
2 remarks that Supriya was making were going to be a
3 problem for her.

4 And as I said before, they were trying to
5 get Katie and trying to get assistance how to -- how
6 to coach and help Supriya understand the impact that
7 she's having by making some of the comments.

8 So in September, as I recall, it came to
9 HR's attention. Again, that would have come to Janet
10 Searce, I believe. And Janet then elevated to me
11 because the -- the facilities manager Brent Wishart
12 had reported that he had witnessed and overheard a
13 meeting or a conversation that was happening in the IT
14 suite.

15 And in that conversation, one of the
16 people's -- well, the supervisor in there, I believe,
17 or at least the -- I think he's classified as
18 supervisor -- he was Joseph Love -- was having a
19 conversation. And in that conversation, Supriya had
20 used what he described as the N-word, and that -- he
21 was upset by that.

22 And he could tell that Joseph Love was upset
23 by that. And a conversation ensued which people in
24 the room were telling Supriya not to use that word.
25 Now, in that room was -- would have been Supriya.

1 Joseph Love is African American and Brent Wishart is
2 Caucasian.

3 So Brent, being a management level, realized
4 that he had a responsibility to do something this as a
5 responsible employee. So he reported that to Janet
6 and to myself. And he was advised to contact EOC
7 regarding that matter, which he did.

8 Q. Okay. And do you know who he contacted?

9 A. I would only be guessing. Well, I don't --
10 I don't know if Rebecca Gibson had anything to do with
11 that. The name -- I'm not totally sure, but the name
12 that sticks, I thought her name was Ms. Wise (ph).
13 She was like a coordinator -- coordinator of reports
14 and everything or complaints that are coming in.

15 She -- she was an intake-type person, you
16 know, taking those type of reports. And I believe --
17 I'm pretty sure Brent had told me that that's who he
18 talked to. They talked on -- they talked on the phone
19 about that, I believe.

20 Q. So that's a pretty serious allegation that
21 somebody is using the N-word, wouldn't you say?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And so what ever happened to that
24 allegation?

25 A. My understanding, that a representative from

1 the EOC, and I don't know if it was Ms. Wise or who it
2 would have been in this particular case, followed up
3 and contacted Joseph Love, I believe. I found out
4 this after the fact because I had called the vice
5 provost for EOC because I -- I hadn't heard any
6 follow-up on it.

7 And I wasn't directly involved in any of the
8 investigation on it. So what Dr. Washington told me
9 was that, on the follow-up, EOC had contacted Joseph
10 Love who advised them that he didn't want to make any
11 further complaint on it, that he had talked directly
12 with Supriya about the situation and, in his opinion,
13 that the situation had been resolved. And that no
14 further action was to be taken.

15 Q. Okay. And was that sufficient in your mind
16 to address the allegation?

17 A. Was it sufficient in my mind?

18 Q. Yeah. Did you think you needed to do
19 anything else with it?

20 A. No. I didn't think there was anything. I
21 also thought that it was consistent with what the
22 managers were telling Katie and what Katie was asking
23 me consult over in terms of comments being made.

24 Again, she's sitting there talking to people
25 that are African American. And it just kept looking

1 like she did not understand the impact she was having
2 when she was talking and -- and making comments.

3 Again, we were trying to help her be
4 successful and also help her understanding how her --
5 what she says does have an impact on people. And then
6 she -- and then this happened.

7 Q. Do you know if anything was ever put in
8 writing to Supriya about this incident?

9 A. I don't know that.

10 Q. Okay. And were you aware that she had
11 gotten a first quarterly evaluation from Katie?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. And that that evaluation was very positive?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. And do you know if she got any other
16 evaluations from Katie?

17 A. I do know that she didn't get it on the same
18 form that she used for the first one, but she had
19 received ongoing evaluations which were shown to be
20 true through a series of emails between Supriya and
21 Katie.

22 So certainly the intent there and what we
23 tell our managers is you need to have -- whether it's
24 a probationary employee or whether it's any employee,
25 what you want to do is have ongoing feedback around

1 what a person is doing well and what a person needs to
2 improve.

3 So on the first -- the first few months, she
4 was doing extremely well. Everybody thought so. So
5 we did not think we had any type of issue at that
6 point in time. We thought that she was going to --
7 actually, we thought she was going to be a star.
8 That's the word I would use.

9 And that was Katie's hope, and that was my
10 hope. And that's why we were doing quite a lot of
11 work with her to help her understand, "Don't let these
12 other things get in your way because you have a -- you
13 have the potential here of being very, very successful
14 and have a future with UNC in the school of public
15 health or anywhere else in UNC."

16 I know that Katie had put it in writing that
17 she had committed to her a hundred percent to help her
18 be successful. Then these problems started to come
19 up. And then the people started to come -- managers
20 started coming forward with the discussions about
21 comments that she's making that are going to get in
22 her way.

23 And again, you know, you've already heard
24 about our approach with EQ and EI, trying to assist
25 her with that. I know Katie had had conversations

1 with her about time management because the amount of
2 time that she was spending either down at IT or in
3 student services. And then when I found out she was
4 spending a lot of time with one of my own staff, then
5 I was really concerned.

6 And so Katie had followed up, and I believe
7 there's an example of where she had followed up in a
8 conversation with her about time management and being
9 where she needed to be and doing work that she needed
10 to do.

11 As time went on, the expectation was that
12 for an employee at her level, or what she was leveled
13 to be, much higher level of work was expected to be
14 handed over to her from Katie, and that's why Supriya
15 was hired in the first place.

16 As Katie continued to talk about progress
17 and how things were going -- because I wanted to know
18 if any of the things we were doing were helping her or
19 not. And Katie was showing me emails back and forth
20 where she was working, where -- she was not only
21 working with the issues of -- that we've already
22 discussed, she was also working issues of accuracy of
23 -- in her reporting or getting projects done in a
24 timely manner.

25 I had asked Katie -- my understanding, the

1 reason we leveled this position that was paying at a
2 higher level than what we probably would do for just
3 an accountant -- finance accountant, we could bring
4 somebody in at a mid-level and not pay at the rate
5 that we're paying for somebody at a senior, advanced
6 level if you're not going to get the work back that
7 you were hoping to get.

8 You know, she -- she had told me types of
9 things that she was trying to get out of that position
10 because Katie was being pressured, I believe, from the
11 dean and the vice dean about getting some of the
12 reports and projects done sooner.

13 And Katie was not going to be able to do
14 that all by herself. And her other staff members were
15 not at the level. That's not what they were hired to
16 do at that senior level. So when Supriya was brought
17 in, our hope was that it's going to address that
18 particular issue.

19 So I asked Katie point-blank how the
20 progress was going, and we were having those
21 conversations, you know, right -- you know, the
22 original conversations I talked about were happening
23 in April and May. And we -- we continued to have
24 conversations about her work output. And it turned
25 out that the work output was not at the level. The --

1 the work that she was providing was not accurate.

2 And when I asked Katie if she was showing
3 her what she was doing wrong and -- and how to do it
4 correctly, she said, "Yes, but Supriya was not
5 accepting the feedback."

6 I remember one -- I can remember one example
7 where they were getting ready to do reports. I think
8 this was for -- I don't remember exactly what the
9 project was. Had to do with reporting out to
10 department chairs, you know, finance information for
11 their individual departments.

12 Katie indicated that Supriya was bringing
13 the information back and was showing a percentage, and
14 one of the percentages came out to 105 percent, which
15 it's supposed to come out to a hundred percent. And
16 when they had a conversation about that, Supriya would
17 not accept that, that she was insistent that what she
18 did was correct.

19 So when Katie went and, as I understand it,
20 looked at the reporting that she did, there were
21 mistakes made in the programming of the software. And
22 I don't recall -- there's two -- I remember a couple
23 of softwares they were using. One was Excel. And I'm
24 trying to remember the name of the other one, which
25 I'm -- I'm not as familiar with. I hadn't even heard

1 of it.

2 Anyway, Katie went back to review that with
3 her again to show her that the way she had created the
4 report was creating the errors. So that was just one
5 example of a number of conversations Katie was having
6 about work output and timeliness.

7 Because I had asked Katie at one point,
8 "You're saying that she's not getting the work done in
9 a timely manner," and she's had it for several weeks
10 -- or a couple of months, maybe three months. I said,
11 "What would be your expectation of an individual at
12 that level when you're asking for this exact same
13 work?"

14 She said "I -- if I had had that -- if that
15 work was being done," and she even gave an example.
16 There was a senior-level person when I first came on
17 board with UNC. Her name was Gladys.

18 Q. Her name was, I'm sorry, what?

19 A. Gladys.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. I think her name was Gladys Yam, Y-a-m, I
22 think.

23 She said had she had given that to Gladys,
24 who also would have been classified as a advanced
25 accounting person -- finance person -- I said, "How

1 long would it have taken Gladys to have it back to
2 you?"

3 She said, "She would have had it back within
4 a couple of weeks."

5 I said, "How long has Supriya had it?"

6 And she says, "She's had it for three
7 months, and it's still not done."

8 Q. And do you recall what this project was?

9 A. I don't recall the name of the project. I
10 don't. I do remember the conversation with Katie,
11 though.

12 And I also remember that it was -- I think
13 it was provided in the justification documentation
14 that Katie had provided when the decision was made
15 that Supriya was not going to continue past her
16 probation period.

17 I don't have that. I don't have that in
18 front of me, but I'm pretty sure the example was
19 given.

20 Q. So tell me more about this justification
21 document.

22 A. Oh, justification when there was made a
23 determination that Supriya wouldn't continue?

24 Q. Yes.

25 A. Sure. If we were going to release an

1 employee, that decision is not made just
2 autocratically by somebody like myself or anybody
3 within the school of public health. We would have to
4 have people involved from Employee and Management
5 Relations at the offices of -- office of human
6 resources, the central office, HR office for the
7 University of North Carolina Chapel Hill.

8 Those people would have to be involved.
9 When those people are involved -- in this particular
10 case, Chenise Crump would have been the representative
11 from Employee and Management Relations that was
12 reviewing the decision.

13 Q. Can you say that name again? Chenise?

14 A. Yeah. I believe Chenise is C-h-e-n-i-s-e,
15 and I believe Crump is C-r-u-m-p.

16 Q. Okay. I'm sorry. Go ahead. Thank you.

17 A. Yeah. So I would -- at my level, I would go
18 through with the manager pretty much asking the same
19 questions that Chenise would ask, which would
20 basically be what's the justification? Is there
21 ongoing feedback going on? Does the individual
22 understand, you know, where they're falling short of
23 the position? What is -- you know, what are the
24 actual issues of concern? What is it that's making
25 the manager feel that they shouldn't continue?

1 And I asked Katie to provide all of those
2 answers in writing, which she did. And then I
3 reviewed it, and then I forwarded that to Chenise.
4 And Chenise reviewed that. And I'm pretty sure --
5 because the latter part of my tenure, I'm pretty sure
6 that even Chenise or the folks at Employee and
7 Management Relations wouldn't make that final decision
8 without talking to somebody within the legal
9 department.

10 And the legal department, more often than
11 not, the person I'm talking to or Chenise is talking
12 to, generally, was Anne Fox, F-o-x. And there might
13 be an E on the end of that. I'm not sure.

14 So a process of review had to happen. That
15 process of review did happen. And once it occurred,
16 then I would be advised Chenise said it's okay to go
17 forward.

18 However, the time frame on this made things
19 even more difficult and complicated because it was
20 falling right into the December time frame. So
21 everything was reviewed, and complete review was done
22 by the first week or two -- probably the first week or
23 two of December. But we had been advised by Employee
24 and Management Relations, which -- and we were also
25 being advised by the dean's office that we do not want

1 employee actions such as terminations occurring during
2 that time frame -- during that December time frame.

3 And so ---

4 Q. And why is that?

5 A. Primarily -- well, primarily because that
6 December time frame, being a time -- celebration,
7 holidays, everything going on at that point in time,
8 they just felt that they did not want to be doing
9 terminations during that period of time. And so we
10 were advised that, "You need -- you need to hold off."

11 You would need to do it before that. They
12 usually would have a date. Usually, it's around the
13 beginning of December and then through December. And
14 then once you get into January, you go back to
15 business as usual. As it fell, that's exactly what
16 happened. That's why the termination date was done
17 when it was done, in January.

18 Q. Did you ever ask Katie if she had done
19 formal evaluations of Supriya?

20 A. Yeah. I did not ask a question about formal
21 evaluation. I asked if there was ongoing evaluations.
22 So ---

23 Q. And did you -- yeah, did you ask her if
24 there was any written documentation of the ongoing
25 evaluations?

1 A. Yes, I did. What was provided was the first
2 form that you had discussed, and also the series of
3 emails that indicated the meetings and conversations
4 that she had ongoing right -- month by month by month
5 during the tenure that Supriya was working in that --
6 in that team.

7 Q. So she ---

8 A. So the intent there is to give ongoing
9 feedback to the employee around their performance.
10 And Katie was able to provide the documentation that
11 showed that she did provide that feedback. It also
12 showed documentation where responses were coming back
13 from Supriya regarding that feedback.

14 Q. So how many emails would she -- would you
15 say she showed you?

16 A. I do not recall that.

17 Q. Okay. But there were enough emails giving
18 her -- giving -- from Katie to Supriya giving her
19 specific feedback about her performance that you felt
20 comfortable with Katie's recommendation that she be
21 terminated?

22 A. That's accurate. Not only was I
23 comfortable, but Chenise Crump was comfortable, and I
24 believe the legal organization was comfortable because
25 all of that was sent as -- as part of the

1 justification for termination.

2 Q. So I believe that your testimony previously
3 was that her performance the first quarter was
4 exceptional. You thought she was going to be a star.
5 Is that correct?

6 A. That's what I said, yes. I thought -- and I
7 did. I thought she was going to be great.

8 Q. Okay. And her performance evaluation
9 reflected that. Is that right?

10 A. She had -- yeah, she had a very good
11 performance evaluation. It may have been indicated in
12 terms of -- I'm not looking at it. This is going to
13 fall under speculation again.

14 But I -- I thought on that first one was the
15 first time that Katie had told her -- told Supriya
16 about the discussion around time management, that that
17 -- that did come up.

18 Other than that, I remember a discussion
19 that her Excel skills -- Excel meaning the program --
20 one of the programs they would use in finance, like
21 everybody in the world uses that. That her Excel
22 skills were very good.

23 Tableau was the other one. I couldn't
24 remember the name of that before. It just came back
25 to me. I'm sorry. The other finance system -- and

1 this is where it started all to come to light. It was
2 everybody's understanding that Supriya's skill set --
3 or one of the reasons that she got hired into an
4 advanced level was her skill set around a specific
5 program called Tableau. Don't ask me how that works
6 because I have no idea.

7 But I know that that came out because
8 Supriya had indicated -- during the hiring process,
9 Katie had advised me that during the interviews and
10 everything, that Supriya had indicated that she had
11 even trained people on Tableau, that her -- that she
12 was an advanced-level user on Tableau.

13 That's where things came to light. After
14 that first quarter, that's when Katie would've been
15 trying to have Supriya utilizing that program to do
16 projects. And it came to light that she was not
17 operating at the level of an advanced user at all, was
18 making errors and making errors of -- well, I already
19 talked about the errors. But that's where that came
20 from.

21 Q. Okay. And do you recall anyone else
22 confirming that Supriya had said that she was an
23 expert at Tableau?

24 A. I don't recall, no.

25 Q. Okay. So did you ever, yourself, have any

1 individual conversations with Supriya about her
2 performance issues that Katie was identifying?

3 A. No. The only thing that I had discussed
4 with Supriya was the issues of being careful about the
5 phraseology that she uses when she's talking. I
6 didn't -- I didn't get into the details of her
7 accounting and finance work. I wouldn't have even
8 known where to start with that.

9 But I was -- I was comfortable that she was
10 getting feedback from Katie around the finance work
11 and what she had to do and, if she was making errors,
12 what she had to do to correct them, things like that.

13 My focus -- my comments to Supriya was more
14 along the interpersonal talking and saying things. I
15 can give you an example of that. This would have
16 been, like, in the October time frame, I think.

17 From time to time, when one of the staff
18 members or one of the managers would have a birthday,
19 the members of their department would -- would have a
20 basic -- you know, the birthday cake celebration,
21 basically. And they would invite members from the
22 other departments. And that happened. That actually
23 happened with the associate dean for information
24 technology and services, Kathy Anderson.

25 So her staff called for a meeting to

1 celebrate Kathy's birthday, and people came down to
2 the IT area and kind of -- there was probably -- I bet
3 there was 15, 20 people within the area, and there
4 were people standing outside the door. So you kind of
5 stand in a circle and you sing happy birthday and you
6 do all that, and then there's -- you know, there's
7 talking, and it was -- everything was high -- high
8 morale, I guess you'd say it was. That's what they
9 were meant to be for.

10 Supriya was at that particular celebration.
11 During that celebration, a comment was made. I can't
12 remember the exact comment, I apologize. But what I
13 do remember was the impact of the comment.

14 It had to -- it went along the lines of,
15 "Such-and-such is the modern-day herpes." And when
16 she said it, the room went quiet. Totally out of
17 context. Don't know what everybody was talking about.
18 But she said it, and she said it loudly. And people
19 all around the room heard it, and everybody just, you
20 know, did one of those freeze things. And then
21 everybody just went on after that.

22 After that session, I spoke to Supriya and I
23 asked her, "Did you see the -- did you see the
24 response that the employees had when you made that
25 comment?"

1 She said, "No."

2 I said, "Well, here's -- here's the" -- and
3 I explained it the same way I just explained to you.
4 And I said, "Do you realize that there were also
5 people standing in the hallway, and do you know who
6 those people were?"

7 And she said, "No."

8 And I said, "Well, that's one of the points
9 I was trying to help you understand when we were --
10 way back when we were talking about EQ and EI and you
11 went to that course, and you said it was a waste of
12 time. You make that type of comment, you have an
13 impact. And the people are looking at you as one of
14 the advanced financial people.

15 "And that's why people are going to be
16 upset. You're not -- you're not even going to know
17 some of the people that hear what you're saying, but
18 you're having an impact on them."

19 That was the type of coaching and counseling
20 I was trying to provide Supriya. A technical coaching
21 and everything, that would have been coming from
22 Katie. That's my recollection.

23 Q. Okay. So if Supriya had her 90-day review
24 in the middle of March, then if she had -- if she was
25 going to have another review like the review she had

1 in March, when would that have occurred?

2 A. Well, with the assumption that you're not
3 just doing an ongoing all along the way and you were
4 going to divide it up, you would divide up ---

5 Q. Yes.

6 A. --- you'd divide it up into quarters.
7 January, February, March; April, May, June; July,
8 August, September ---

9 Q. Okay. So March -- so she would have gotten
10 -- would have gotten one in June. Okay. And then --
11 and then that would have been the last month of the
12 second quarter. So then the last month of the third
13 quarter would be -- what, July, August, September?

14 MS. JOHNSON: Objection. You can
15 answer.

16 THE WITNESS: It would be 90 days.

17 Q. (Ms. Bateman) Yeah, in September.

18 A. So you're talking about 90 days. Yeah. 90
19 days.

20 Q. And then in December?

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. Okay. But your testimony is that in lieu of
23 the formal review that she'd gotten in March, she had
24 ongoing conversations with Katie, which were
25 documented in emails, all during this period of time,

1 April, May, June, July, August, September, October,
2 November, December, right?

3 **A. That's my recollection, yes.**

4 Q. And that you actually required Katie to show
5 you that she'd had that feedback when she wanted to
6 terminate Supriya. Is that right?

7 **A. That's correct.**

8 Q. And that not only she had to provide it to
9 you, she had to provide it to central HR at UNC. Is
10 that right?

11 **A. Right, Employee and Management Relations.**
12 **That's correct.**

13 MS. BATEMAN: Okay. So I would like to
14 take a break here. And that'll be a bathroom break or
15 whatever. And I want to go back through my notes.
16 And -- and that would be great. Can we go off the
17 record?

18 (Brief recess: 12:45 p.m. to 12:58 p.m.)

19 Q. (Ms. Bateman) Okay. Mr. Regan, I am going
20 to follow back up with some areas that I did not go
21 into while you were testifying earlier. I know that
22 you told me earlier about an incident involving a
23 report by Brent Wishart against Supriya.

24 But you also told me that Supriya had been
25 involved in a case that had been filed -- had had

1 experience with I think you said EOC based on a
2 complaint filed on her behalf. Can you tell me more
3 about that?

4 A. Yeah. My -- yes. My recollection -- and
5 that would have been the latter part of the year, I
6 think around October time frame. Well, let me tell
7 you how I recall it. Here's what I think happened to
8 the best of my recollection.

9 A manager, I believe that was Charletta Sims
10 Evans -- Charletta Sims Evans who is the associate
11 dean for student services came and told Katie
12 Thornsvard that an email or a text had been -- I guess
13 it was a text that had been sent by one of the
14 employees in the school to Supriya that offended
15 Supriya.

16 And she knew that Supriya had been offended
17 because Supriya had gone down to the student services
18 area and spoke to one of the employees in that area --
19 I think her name is Natiaya Neal -- and showed the
20 text to Natiaya who then -- then reported that to
21 Charletta.

22 Charletta then went to Katie and reported
23 that the situation had occurred. Now, the -- when it
24 was being reported, Supriya was not on site. She was
25 actually on vacation as I recall. The report, as

1 made, indicated that the text said in -- I don't know
2 the exact wording.

3 To my recollection it had to do -- "If
4 you're going to wear a red dress like that, you need
5 to give me a warning before I have a heart attack,"
6 something along those lines. And it was determined
7 that Supriya actually was upset about that and even
8 responded to the text by saying, "What would your wife
9 say about this text?"

10 So I was not able to talk to Supriya
11 immediately, but I had all that information. So I
12 made the decision to file a report with the EOC on
13 behalf of Supriya to make sure that all of that was on
14 record, and I did.

15 Q. Who did you file it with?

16 A. I -- the EOC office. Again, I couldn't tell
17 you -- well, that report -- there's basically three
18 ways to make -- make a report to the EOC office. At
19 least there was when I was working there.

20 You could call them and do it by phone. You
21 could do it in person, or you can also do it online.
22 Because part of the ConnectCarolina operation on the
23 computer was that the EOC has a division of that where
24 you can actually file a complaint.

25 So I filed the complaint on behalf of

1 Supriya because she was absent, knowing that when she
2 returned that the EOC office would be in touch with
3 her about it.

4 Q. Okay. And when you say, "EOC," what does
5 that stand for?

6 A. I guess what I'm thinking is equal
7 opportunity commission, but that's not how UNC says
8 it. It's the office -- isn't that something? It's --
9 yeah, what I'm thinking is EEOC which would be -- I
10 cannot remember the acronym at -- at the moment
11 without actually looking it up. Do you want me to
12 look it up?

13 Q. No, that's okay.

14 A. It's the office that would handle
15 investigations or concerns regarding anything to do
16 with what the EEOC would normally have concerns about
17 in terms of discrimination, harassment or such matters
18 as that.

19 Q. Okay. So did you file it by phone, in
20 person or online?

21 A. Online.

22 Q. And who was the employee that sent the text?

23 A. Can I just -- can I just ask is it -- is it
24 okay for me to name that employee?

25 Q. Yes.

1 MS. JOHNSON: Valerie, I'm going to
2 object to that because it is a -- that would be --
3 that would constitute employee information of another
4 employee whose permission we don't have to give that
5 type of information.

6 However, I will consult with university
7 counsel after this deposition and see if there's a way
8 we can supply it to you outside of the deposition
9 form.

10 MS. BATEMAN: Okay. Are you ---

11 MS. JOHNSON: I just need to -- I just
12 need to consult, and I don't want to stop the
13 deposition right now to see ---

14 MS. BATEMAN: Okay. So are you
15 instructing the witness not to answer?

16 MS. JOHNSON: Yes -- no. He can -- I'm
17 instructing the witness not to provide the name at
18 this time. And I'll revisit that before the end of
19 the deposition.

20 MS. BATEMAN: Okay. Well, I'm going to
21 -- I'm going to have to hold the deposition open for
22 that reason, too. We're still -- I'm still holding it
23 open because of the -- we're missing the testimony
24 about the investigations.

25 MS. JOHNSON: That's fine. I'm also

1 going to see if we can supply you the name. But if
2 you just want to continue, I'll see -- I'll see if we
3 can do it in the context during the course of this
4 deposition or if we can supply it to you in another
5 way afterwards.

6 But that's fine. So -- but you can just go
7 ahead and continue, but I will instruct him at this
8 particular time in the deposition not to give the
9 person's name.

10 Q. (Ms. Bateman) Okay. So was the employee
11 male?

12 A. The person that wrote the text was male,
13 yeah.

14 Q. Was male. And was this someone who was
15 above Supriya in the -- in the chain of command?

16 A. No.

17 Q. No? It was her peer?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. Ms. Bateman, may I also answer your earlier
21 question? It's the Office of Equal Opportunity and
22 Compliance. I haven't had to say that in quite a
23 while. I apologize for the delay on that answer.

24 Q. Okay. Thank you for that.

25 And when Supriya came back from vacation,

1 did you tell her about this?

2 A. I did. I had received -- actually, I
3 received an email from the Office of Equal Opportunity
4 and Compliance wanting to make sure that Supriya was
5 not going to be surprised by their call. And so they
6 asked me to contact Supriya, which I did, to let her
7 know that there would be a call coming in from them.

8 And after that, I informed the -- that
9 office that I had contacted Supriya to let her know
10 that a call was coming from them. And at that point
11 in time is when they contacted Supriya, to the best of
12 my recollection.

13 Q. Okay. And what was the upshot of that
14 investigation if you know?

15 A. Well, my -- my recollection is that after
16 being contacted by EOC, that Supriya had indicated to
17 EOC that she did not want any -- did not want to make
18 any further complaint regarding the matter. What was
19 actually said, I don't know because -- because I
20 wasn't part of that conversation.

21 Q. Okay. And it is your testimony -- I just
22 want -- I'm reconfirming that in November, you deny
23 that Supriya came to you and complained about Katie --
24 about -- I'm just going back up to this date, sorry.

25 That you deny that Supriya ever came to your

1 office and complained about Katie bullying her?

2 A. Yes. The reason I'm -- I'm saying that is
3 during the exit interview I asked Supriya point-blank,
4 "Why didn't you come to me to talk about any of these
5 matters that you're bringing to my attention now?"

6 And she said, "I didn't bring it to your
7 attention because I thought you were too close to
8 Katie," is what she told me.

9 And that was witnessed by one of the lead HR
10 consultants, Abbey McLennan.

11 Q. And who was that?

12 A. Abbey McLennan is the other lead consultant
13 that I identified earlier as working within our human
14 resource department. She sat in in the conversation
15 -- or the exit interview. She was there, Supriya was
16 there and I was there.

17 And during that time is when Supriya made
18 the -- and I asked point blank. You know, Supriya
19 brought up the conversation about the comment that
20 Teri Smith made about diversity. She brought up the
21 comment about Katie making a hair comment. And she
22 did a whole laundry list of comments of why she was
23 upset and that she did not feel that she was being
24 treated correctly.

25 And I asked her specifically, "Why didn't

1 you come to me and talk to me about any of these
2 things?"

3 And she said -- because she was afraid to do
4 so because Katie and I were too close is what she
5 stated.

6 Q. Okay. Were you close to Katie?

7 A. What do you mean by "close"? We were
8 colleagues. We were professional colleagues. We
9 worked in the same building for the same organization.
10 Are we talking physically close where I was two doors
11 down from the -- the facilities -- or the finance
12 department. I don't know what Supriya meant by
13 "close." She -- she didn't elaborate.

14 Q. Okay. So when she told you about the Teri
15 Smith diversity comment, you already knew about that,
16 though, right?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Because Caitlin had told you about that. Is
19 that right?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. And Caitlin had told you about that -- let's
22 see. When had Caitlin told you about that?

23 A. That would be back in the May time frame.

24 Q. May?

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. April, May time frame approximately.

3 Q. Okay. Now, do you recall when Todd Nicolet
4 left?

5 A. I think it was June or July 2019.

6 Q. And after he left, Katie was -- had no
7 direct supervisor at that time. Is that right?

8 A. No, that's not right. She reported directly
9 to Dean Barbara Rimer at that time -- during that
10 time.

11 Q. Okay. And so Dean Rimer was her supervision
12 until Todd Nicolet's replacement was hired?

13 A. That's correct.

14 Q. Is that right?

15 A. That's correct.

16 Q. Okay. And when was that person hired?

17 A. I don't remember the month. I don't
18 remember the month that she came in. We had an
19 extensive search for that position. Basically, it's a
20 vice dean for the school. I don't recall the month
21 she was hired. I don't. Latter part of 2019.

22 Q. Okay. And when -- and I think earlier when
23 we were talking about this, Supriya saying that she
24 talked to you in November 2019, you said -- and about
25 feeling bullied by Katie, and you said, "Oh just talk

1 to her and tell her how you feel."

2 You -- do you ever recall giving Supriya the
3 advice to talk directly to Katie about any concerns?

4 A. No, I do not.

5 Q. So it's your testimony that Supriya never
6 complained to you about Katie prior to her exit
7 interview?

8 A. That's correct. That's my recollection.
9 That -- that was easy to remember because she told me
10 why she didn't again.

11 Q. At her exit interview, right?

12 A. At her exit interview, right.

13 Q. So when she made those allegations at her
14 exit interview, did you -- what did you decide to do,
15 if anything?

16 A. Well, I -- I told Supriya what the process
17 is in terms of being able to file an appeal to the
18 decision if she chose to do that. And, you know, I
19 basically told her that -- I gave her the phone number
20 even to management and employee -- Employee and
21 Management Relations.

22 I'm pretty sure it even says in the
23 documentation I give her -- I gave her, that she had
24 15 calendar days in which to file an appeal. And she
25 did file an appeal.

1 Q. Okay. And you testified earlier that she
2 gave you a laundry list of things that had happened to
3 her that she thought were discriminatory. Can you
4 tell me any more of those other than the hair comment
5 and the diversity hire comment?

6 A. Again, I don't have the file in front of me,
7 so I don't want to do that by speculation. But she --
8 I do recall -- all right. I do recall a couple of
9 comments that -- well, I -- maybe I shouldn't have
10 said laundry list.

11 But she -- she stated that she felt that
12 Katie was taking credit for the work that she had
13 actually done, that somebody had to oversee Katie's
14 work because Katie was doing her work wrong and giving
15 inaccurate information.

16 Again, she talked about the diversity hair
17 comment. She talked about the diversity and the hair
18 comment. She said -- what did she say? I'm trying to
19 think of the things she said about her. Oh, she said
20 that Dr. Kosorok thought that she was outstanding. I
21 remember her mentioning Dr. Kosorok's name.

22 And I know she indicated that she didn't
23 feel that it was appropriate for Katie to just be able
24 to make this decision. And -- and also, she was upset
25 that it was so close to her probation date.

1 Q. Did she tell you that she'd not gotten any
2 feedback from Katie about her performance?

3 A. I don't recall if that was one of the
4 comments she made or not. I don't recall that. I
5 think ---

6 Q. Do you recall ---

7 A. --- what she was doing, she was looking
8 right at the letter, and the letter was spelling out
9 the reasons that she wasn't going to -- well, the
10 reason for termination.

11 I remember she pointed out the discussion
12 about low work output. And I remember her saying
13 there is lots of work that Katie has never reviewed
14 and that -- I think she also said she wanted to go
15 talk to Charletta Sims Evans.

16 Q. But the decision had already been made ---

17 A. Oh ---

18 Q. Go ahead. I'm sorry.

19 A. I -- and one other comment I do recall her
20 making, she said -- I'm pretty sure she said it this
21 way. She had said that, "When I stopped in to talk to
22 you, don't you remember me hesitating in that I wanted
23 to tell you something more?"

24 And I remember saying exactly, "No, I don't
25 remember you doing that."

1 And that's, you know, right in line -- I
2 don't know which was said first. I think that was --
3 which led into me asking her, "Why didn't you come and
4 talk to me about all these things you were concerned
5 about?"

6 And she said -- she indicated that she
7 planned to come and talk to people after her
8 probation. But before probation, she felt that she
9 was afraid to do that.

10 I was concerned about that because our
11 conversations had always been positive. I thought she
12 knew that everything that we were trying to do we were
13 doing and talking about how to make her successful.
14 So it did surprise me when she said she was afraid to
15 come and talk to me because I was too close to Katie.
16 But that is what she said.

17 Q. Okay. Did she ever say anything to you
18 about Katie treating her differently about her eating
19 habits?

20 A. No.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. I don't know if that was one of the things
23 she said during the exit interview or not. I don't
24 remember that.

25 Q. And did she ever say anything to you about

1 Katie putting a Post-it Note on her computer screen
2 about -- asking about her time sheet?

3 A. No.

4 Q. And did any other employees ever come to you
5 and complain about Katie?

6 A. Not that I can recall, no.

7 Q. Would you have documented them if they had?

8 A. Well, if it was a complaint that warrant
9 documentation, I would have, sure.

10 Q. And what kind of complaint would have
11 warranted documentation?

12 A. Well, violation of policy, violation of
13 school policy, UNC policy, accusing her of anything
14 that would be a violation of policy or violation of
15 law.

16 Q. Okay. Did you ever work with Katie to
17 terminate another employee?

18 A. Work with Katie? I don't think we ever
19 terminated an employee within Katie's area that wasn't
20 either just a retirement or leaving the organization
21 to go for another organization, voluntary resignation.
22 I think that's all it is.

23 Those are pretty straightforward, and I
24 generally wouldn't do those. That generally would be
25 something that Janet would have assisted with.

1 Q. So did Katie terminate Supriya's
2 predecessor?

3 A. No. Terminate?

4 Q. I'm sorry?

5 A. Did she terminate? No. Her predecessor?

6 Q. Yeah. Who was Katie's predecessor in that
7 job?

8 A. Supriya ---

9 MS. JOHNSON: Katie? Valerie, you're
10 saying Katie.

11 Q. (Ms. Bateman) I'm sorry, Supriya. Who was
12 Supriya's predecessor in that job?

13 A. Well, I guess that calls for a little bit of
14 clarification. The job that Supriya was in was
15 classified as an advanced-level finance accountant.
16 And the person -- the only other person that was at
17 that level previously, during my tenure, would have
18 been six years prior to Supriya. That would have been
19 Gladys Yam.

20 There were other -- there was another staff
21 member that would have been at a lower-level
22 accounting position. Her name, I believe was Kirsten,
23 I think. Kirsten -- I can't -- I can't remember the
24 last name. I'm sorry.

25 Q. And she was there ---

1 A. Without looking at -- without looking it up
2 on the computer or something, I can't remember the
3 last name. Her first name was -- I think it was
4 Kirsten, K-i-r-s-t-e-n.

5 Q. Okay. And she was there ---

6 A. She would have been a -- she would have been
7 a lower level than what Supriya was classified as.
8 And so she would not have -- yeah. So it's not
9 exactly the same position. I thought that you should
10 know that.

11 Q. Okay. Was she terminated?

12 A. She resigned and indicated that she was
13 going to work for a different organization.

14 Q. Okay. So she was not terminated?

15 A. Not for cause.

16 Q. Okay. And do you know why she resigned?

17 A. Only that she indicated that she was going
18 to work for another organization.

19 Q. And did she have an exit interview?

20 A. She would have -- she would have had a exit
21 with Janet Searce.

22 Q. And did Janet ever tell you the results of
23 that exit interview?

24 A. I don't recall a conversation like that, no.

25 Q. But it's not -- it's your recollection that

1 she was -- was she ever threatened with termination?

2 A. I would have taken exception to that. Not
3 to my knowledge.

4 Q. And do you have any recollection about her
5 work performance?

6 A. The only thing I remember about Kirsten in
7 work was that she was struggling to do a project with
8 someone from the IT department. And it -- I think the
9 issue -- I don't know. It sounded like -- well, I
10 don't even remember what they were -- there was some
11 kind of discussion that they were having.

12 Yeah. I remember that Kathy Anderson, who,
13 you know, the person in the IT department would have
14 reported up to, had asked for me to come and assist
15 with a conversation with them. I don't even remember
16 what the date was on that, but whomever -- trying to
17 do like a team-build discussion with them. Because
18 that was my background.

19 And I remember the gist of that being that
20 most -- most disagreements within a work team are not
21 anything to do with people's personality or anything
22 like that. I remember having the conversation around
23 defining, you know, what -- the project goals, what
24 each person's roles would be, what the process should
25 be, or is. Does everybody understanding what that

1 process is?

2 Interpersonal relationship is a very small
3 percentage of the things that cause the overall
4 problem. Usually, they get into a problem with
5 interpersonal relationship because the first three
6 problems aren't defined well enough. They don't have
7 a understanding of what their goals and roles really
8 are, and they're -- and they're getting upset. And so
9 they basically blame each other.

10 And I remember that conversation happening.
11 I thought things got better after that, but anyway.
12 Kirsten decided to leave, go -- and it must be she
13 found a different job that she liked better.

14 Q. So did you have any discussions with Kathy
15 and Katie about the project they were working on?

16 A. Yeah. I was trying to understand myself,
17 you know, where it was having a problem. Katie -- you
18 know, Katie and Kathy -- Katie and Kathy and I all
19 worked on the administrative unit's leadership team so
20 we would -- we would talk often around that.

21 My recollection was that Katie was trying to
22 get -- get part of a finance process automated, and
23 that's why it was between a finance person and a IT
24 person trying to do that.

25 Now, I've done that type of thing myself, so

1 -- and I remember talking to Katie and to Kathy about
2 that. And I said, "You know, I've tried to have
3 software programs created in-house where you're not
4 taking them off the shelf. And it's hard to do."

5 I -- in my opinion, and this is a bias -- my
6 opinion is that IT professional software developers do
7 not approach things the way the people using the
8 actual system thinks about things. And I was
9 suggesting pretty much to Katie and to Kathy that a
10 lot of the disagreement can be right there. They're
11 not speaking the same language.

12 And I've been there, and I know what that
13 feels like. So taking the time to clarify. Again, I
14 tried to break it down, at least make sure they
15 understand the ultimate goal, what their roles are in
16 the process and what process they should be using in
17 -- in working through that.

18 And then elevate the issues. Don't sit
19 there and argue back and forth and turn it into
20 something personal. Elevate it to both of them before
21 it gets to that level.

22 Beyond that, no. No, I don't have anything
23 else in that. But I remember that because I spent a
24 lot of time preparing to try to assist with that
25 situation.

1 Q. Okay. So did you ever work with Charlotte
2 Nunez-Wolff?

3 A. Yes. That's Dr. Wolff. That's who I was
4 talking about when we first started the conversation.

5 Q. Okay. Remind me what you were telling me.

6 A. Well, she was one of the people that
7 interviewed me, and I work directly for her before she
8 left the organization. She went to Duke.

9 Q. And she was replaced by Todd Nicolet?

10 A. That was right at the beginning of -- that
11 one stood out to me because I came on board, and she
12 sat down with me one day and said she was leaving.
13 You know, I thought she was kidding. But she wasn't.
14 She had an offer from Duke that she decided to take.

15 My recollection is -- and I should remember
16 a name here. I think there was a gentleman that was
17 not full time with UNC but was actually contracted to
18 assist Dean Rimer for a little while. But -- and I do
19 mean a little while because they were not there long.

20 And then after that person, I think is --
21 yeah, after that person would be when Todd Nicolet was
22 hired.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. I'd have -- I'd have to look up that name of
25 that contractor.

1 Q. Okay. Do you recall somebody by the name of
2 Robert Pitt?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. And who was he?

5 A. Robert Pitt was a systems -- I don't
6 remember his exact title, but he worked for Charlotte
7 Nunez-Wolff directly. When Charlotte Nunez-Wolff
8 left, he left almost immediately after her.

9 Q. And when did Katie leave?

10 A. Well, during my tenure, Katie never left.

11 Q. Oh, okay. Got it.

12 A. I -- I believe she has recently left. And I
13 think she went to work for some -- I think she's at
14 Duke.

15 Q. Okay. Did you go to the finance meetings
16 they had?

17 A. No. What finance meeting? I ---

18 Q. Well, there were some finance meetings in
19 which Katie and Supriya and Todd made some reports. I
20 didn't know if you were present at any of those
21 meetings.

22 A. I was not.

23 Q. Okay. So did any of your HR staff ever talk
24 to you about Supriya?

25 A. Well, again, Caitlin and I talked, you know,

1 in the May time frame. And Janet and I talked in the
2 November time frame because Janet told me that Supriya
3 brought up the comment about the hair discussion. And
4 I had let Janet know the background on that and that
5 that had already been dealt with at EOC. There
6 wouldn't be any more action that she would need to
7 take on that.

8 But that was -- I remember that being in the
9 September time frame, Ms. Bateman, because it was very
10 close to when the complaint was made about -- when we
11 talked about the N-word.

12 So a number of months had transpired here
13 before Janet was approached by Supriya to talk about
14 the hair. We thought that was a done deal and that
15 everybody had made things right and apologized and
16 reports made to EOC, counsel, corrected, people told
17 to cease and desist for the -- all of that had
18 transpired.

19 So Janet coming to talk to me in November
20 was a little surprising. But she said that Supriya
21 had stopped by and told her about that. So she was
22 making sure I was aware of it, which I was.

23 Q. And it was only -- it was only the hair
24 comment? Is that what you're saying?

25 A. That's all I ---

1 Q. I'm trying to understand. You said you
2 talked with Caitlin in May ---

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. --- right?

5 A. Right.

6 Q. About Supriya?

7 A. Right.

8 Q. And that was about the diversity hire
9 comments?

10 A. Diversity hire comments and time management
11 issues, was spending too much time, et cetera, et
12 cetera, correct. I think ---

13 Q. And then in September you said the N-word
14 complaint was made by Brent Wishart?

15 A. That's correct.

16 Q. Okay. And then you said you and Janet
17 talked in November because Supriya had stopped by her
18 office and complained about the hair comment. Is that
19 what you said?

20 A. I didn't say, "complain." I said she told
21 -- told Janet about the hair comment at that time, and
22 Janet told me about it to make sure that I was aware
23 of that conversation. And I -- so I wanted Janet to
24 know the background on that. I said I was aware of
25 that and it had been addressed.

1 There shouldn't be -- unless Supriya wanted
2 to do something else, both Caitlin and Janet, to my
3 recollection, told me that their -- you know,
4 consultants are pretty standard about how they do
5 this. They basically would listen carefully, find out
6 what the person wanted to do, let the person know what
7 the resources were to assist them.

8 Both Janet and Caitlin told me that that --
9 that had happened. And both, to my -- I know Caitlin
10 did, and -- and I'm pretty sure Janet told me that no
11 action was being requested at that time that she was
12 talking to Supriya. Supriya was not asking for a
13 report to be made other than she just wanted Janet to
14 know about that comment. So ---

15 Q. So do you ---

16 A. --- Janet told me.

17 Q. Yeah, do you recall ---

18 A. And I was aware of that comment ---

19 Q. Sorry.

20 A. --- and the whole background on it.

21 Q. Say that again, I'm sorry. I was talking
22 over you. I apologize.

23 I'm sorry, Mr. Regan, could you just say
24 what you said again? I was talking over you and I
25 missed what you said.

1 A. Don't know where we -- what was the last
2 thing you heard?

3 Q. Yeah.

4 MS. JOHNSON: I think you might have
5 frozen up, Mr. Regan, for a few seconds there. So
6 Valerie, maybe you just want to repeat your question.
7 It looked to me like his frame froze up.

8 Q. (Ms. Bateman) Okay. Well, you had said
9 Janet said that Supriya was not asking for any sort of
10 report to be made.

11 A. My recollection is that Janet was telling me
12 because Supriya had just stopped into her office, made
13 the comment -- I don't even remember how she said it,
14 but was making the comment about, you know, that Katie
15 had made comment about her hair. Janet was letting me
16 know that because there wasn't any action being
17 requested by Supriya.

18 So when Janet let me know about that
19 comment, I told Janet what the history of that comment
20 was and how I had been involved previously and -- as
21 well as EOC was aware of that.

22 All that to say that Janet, you know,
23 wouldn't have been required to do anything else with
24 that once she knew that from me.

25 Q. Okay. Do you -- do you recall when Barbara

1 Rimer promoted Katie?

2 A. No. I don't remember the date. I don't
3 remember the -- I don't even remember the month. That
4 took some time. It's not easy to get promoted at UNC,
5 administratively or any other way. But that -- that
6 took some real time. There were -- there were a lot
7 -- well, the reason I'm saying that is UNC is trying
8 to be very, very careful about -- and be fiscally
9 responsible.

10 So they had a full process in terms of
11 review and approval that had to happen up through the
12 office of human resources at the central office. It
13 took quite some time to get approval for Katie's
14 promotion. But she was promoted, and I can't remember
15 the exact time of when that happened without looking
16 at the computer files or something to tell you that.

17 Q. Okay. Well, I'm going to -- I'm going to
18 back to Katie's -- Supriya's charge of discrimination.
19 And in her charge, she says, after she came back from
20 vacation in October, Katie was out of the office for a
21 few days. And Supriya says she got up the courage to
22 go talk to HR, and she said she talked to Janet about
23 Katie's comments about her hair.

24 And she said she also told Janet how Katie
25 was creating a hostile work environment for her. Did

1 Janet ever say anything to you about that?

2 A. She did not.

3 Q. Okay. And I think you said, when you had
4 the conversation with Caitlin, that you, you know,
5 were talking to Caitlin about how much time she spent
6 with Supriya. Is that right?

7 A. Yeah. What I was talking to Caitlin about
8 is if it's an HR matter, that's one thing. If it's
9 not an HR matter and it's just personal conversation,
10 just talking without any business related, to keep
11 those down to like five minutes. We don't tell people
12 they can't talk to each other, but we do tell people
13 that we are being paid to do our work.

14 And I wanted Caitlin to -- both Caitlin to
15 realize that what my expectations were of Caitlin and
16 also how to handle it if any employee were to come in
17 and just kind of sit there and start talking and take
18 up lots of her time. Because there isn't any other
19 consultant that has any time to waste. They have a
20 very, very complicated and difficult challenging job.
21 And they're all really good at it.

22 So I didn't want people to start thinking
23 that HR was causing the problem because they were off
24 talking, not doing work inappropriately like that.
25 But specifically, what I wanted Caitlin to know is --

1 and I was after two things in that conversation.

2 One is, you know, were there any complaints
3 being made? Is she aware of any problems that the
4 managers were reporting to Katie about being upset
5 about things that Supriya was saying? Was she aware
6 of anything like that? Had she heard anything like
7 that?

8 And I knew that she sat right across from
9 the IT office where it was reported that Supriya was
10 spending and exorbitant amount of time non-work
11 related. So I wanted to get Caitlin's perspective on
12 that as well.

13 Q. Okay. So other than Janet and your
14 conversations with her that you've just detailed, did
15 you have any conversations with anyone else in HR
16 about Supriya?

17 A. Well, I considered Will Frey part of HR.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. He's the organizational development
20 consultant that I talked to back in, you know, the end
21 of April, early May time frame about the EQ, EI
22 discussion. He's part of the central HR -- or he was
23 at the time. I think he's retired, too. He's part of
24 the central HR organization.

25 Of course I -- I talked to Chenise Crump

1 from Employee and Management Relations. I referred to
2 her earlier as well.

3 Q. That was near the end when you were getting
4 guidance on terminating Supriya. Is that right?

5 A. Correct.

6 Q. Okay. And your conversations with Will Frey
7 were prompted by Katie's discussions with you about
8 her perception that Supriya lacked emotional quotient
9 and emotional intelligence. Is that right?

10 MS. JOHNSON: Objection. You can
11 answer.

12 THE WITNESS: That's not how I would
13 characterize that. What I would say is -- and I think
14 what I said earlier that managers -- other managers
15 were coming to Katie and saying that -- that Supriya
16 was making comments that would be considered
17 inappropriate and could impact her position if
18 somebody doesn't do coaching and counseling and
19 mentorship of her.

20 Q. (Ms. Bateman) Okay. And who were these ---

21 A. Katie then ---

22 Q. Go ahead, I'm sorry.

23 A. I'm sorry. Katie came to me once that
24 started to occur. And out of those conversations,
25 that's when I contacted Will Frey. I also contacted

1 Brandon Washington with the EOC office to talk through
2 some of that information as well.

3 Q. Okay. And who were the managers that
4 complained to Katie?

5 A. To my knowledge, I know of two. One was
6 Charletta Sims Evans, who was the -- who is, I
7 believe, the associate dean for student services for
8 the school of public health. And Kathy Anderson,
9 who's the associate dean for information systems and
10 support for the school of public health.

11 Q. And what were the nature of their
12 complaints?

13 A. Well, that's where the problem was. Katie
14 was coming to me for assistance on, "How am I supposed
15 to talk to Supriya when the people won't come -- come
16 out and say anything other than 'inappropriate,'" and
17 should be coaching and need to tell her the impact
18 she's having on other people?"

19 But they didn't want to say the actual words
20 that were being used until the N-word complaint
21 happened in September. Then it was kind of clear at
22 that point in time. When that -- when that happened,
23 -- well, yeah, when that happened, it became more
24 clear that the interventions that we were trying to
25 have and the conversations that I was trying to have,

1 so far, were not being successful.

2 Q. Okay. So when Katie comes to you and says,
3 "Well, Charletta came to me and Kathy came to me. And
4 they complained that Supriya made inappropriate
5 remarks, but they won't tell me what she said. How
6 can I help Supriya?" Is that what happened?

7 A. Yeah. That's very much what happened.
8 That ---

9 Q. And -- go ahead.

10 A. So...

11 MS. JOHNSON: You might have frozen.

12 THE WITNESS: I know Katie knew that
13 there was one phrase that Supriya used that she
14 shared. I mean, it was right off the bat. It was
15 like right at the beginning of her starting the work.

16 Katie and her team -- well, I thought Katie
17 and her team were quite close, you know? I didn't sit
18 very far from them so -- and the printer that I
19 oftentimes had to use was also located within their
20 suite. So I would be in and out of there. I thought
21 their morale and I thought their comradery was -- was
22 outstanding.

23 And I know that they had lunches together.
24 I didn't know that situations came up during the
25 lunches. But one thing I am aware of is, like, right

1 off the bat, that Supriya made a comment in front of
2 the other team members telling a story. I believe it
3 was about being harassed in her previous work.

4 And in the process of telling that story
5 used the phrase "bunch of white jerks." And I believe
6 that's when Katie informed her that it was -- you
7 know, we don't talk that way -- we don't talk that way
8 about -- we don't generalize with -- about people,
9 their race and all that type of thing here.

10 So with that and the N-word complaint and
11 overhearing her at the -- at the birthday party and
12 the language that she had used there, I -- I believe
13 one of the other things -- that is coming to me as
14 we're talking through it -- but one of the things that
15 I believe also had occurred, Katie made me aware of,
16 was Teri Smith had come to her.

17 Teri -- Teri was also -- actually, everybody
18 in that finance group I thought were outstanding, but
19 Teri was one of the people that, you know, would be in
20 charge of the finance operation, make sure the office
21 is doing what they're supposed to if Katie is out.

22 So Teri had gone to Katie and -- and
23 commented that people are coming to her also talking
24 -- but what they were saying is, "She's making
25 comments about black people, and she's making comments

1 about white people. And this is getting people
2 upset." But they wouldn't say what the exact comments
3 were beyond that.

4 Again, that's where we came up with trying
5 to help her. We were trying all the way through, as
6 much as we could, to help Supriya understand the
7 impact that she was having with the things that she
8 was saying and trying to prevent things from getting
9 worse.

10 Q. (Ms. Bateman) So when was this -- when did
11 Teri Smith go to Katie?

12 A. I'm not sure of the date on that. It would
13 have been, you know, one of the conversations that
14 Katie had had with me. Katie had a lot of
15 conversations with me because, like I say, our offices
16 were -- were close. My office door is always open
17 unless there's a meeting, and would stop in and ask
18 for advice or counsel or who to talk to or, from time
19 to time, would update me on some of the things that
20 were going on.

21 So she was trying to make it very clear,
22 "Look, I'm not just coming to you to waste your time.
23 I'm coming to you because people are coming to me, and
24 I need assistance here about how to help Supriya. And
25 it's hard because I'm not getting a lot of exact

1 quotes from anybody."

2 So that's kind of the situation we were in
3 in trying to help Supriya.

4 Q. Okay. So did you -- did you ever suggest to
5 Katie that she press people to give her details?

6 A. She did ask people for details.

7 Q. And they refused to give them to her?

8 A. They said they did not want to do that.

9 Q. And how many conversations do you think you
10 had with Katie about Supriya?

11 A. I don't know how many. We had a number of
12 them.

13 Q. I mean, more than -- more than five?

14 A. Yeah. I -- I don't exactly know how many.
15 Because, like I said, my office is two doors down from
16 the finance office, so we would have -- and Katie and
17 I would be in leadership ops -- leadership operations
18 meetings together as well. So there was a lot of time
19 spent discussing how she could support.

20 And what we were trying to do was help
21 Supriya be successful. There were a lot of
22 conversations about that. But she -- Katie was --
23 Katie was asking for a lot of help. She even went to
24 the extent to go to the EOC office, which is at the --
25 all the way at the other end of campus to OHR, you

1 know, to talk to people -- well, like Rebecca Gibson,
2 asking for coaching and counseling. It was -- it was
3 difficult. And when I had ---

4 Q. And when you ---

5 A. And when I had a conversation myself trying
6 to help Supriya, her response to me was -- well, two
7 responses I recall. One from the training she said
8 was a complete waste of her time. And when I brought
9 the situation, the herpes comment at the birthday
10 party, to her, she said, "I don't" -- she didn't see
11 why that was a problem at all, and she told me so.

12 Q. So other than those two conversations you
13 had with Supriya, how many conversations did you have
14 with her?

15 A. About what?

16 Q. About anything.

17 A. Well, I -- you know, like I say, my office
18 is located two doors from them and I had to go in and
19 out. Conversations I had with Supriya on a day-to-day
20 basis were generally, what I would say, are very, very
21 congenial. She would smile. She would say hello. I
22 would do the same. But like I say, I was in and out
23 because I had my responsibilities to attend to as
24 well.

25 So talking to Supriya, we would probably

1 have discussion like that almost every day. In terms
2 of the EQ, the EI training, in terms of me making her
3 aware of the -- excuse me, the texting complaint,
4 harassment complaint that was made on her behalf,
5 probably only maybe three, four or five, if you count
6 those up.

7 Like I said, I had asked -- I would have had
8 a lot of conversations with her had she had the
9 conversations with me that she had at the exit
10 interview. Because she never came across like she was
11 having any type of problem with Katie.

12 And that's why I asked her, "Why didn't you
13 come and talk to me? I'm right here. I'm two doors
14 away."

15 And that's when she gave me the answer about
16 "Hey, you're too close to Katie. I was afraid to do
17 that."

18 Q. Okay. I want to just look quickly at the
19 reasons given in her termination letter, which was
20 dated January 6th. Now, do you recall who wrote that
21 letter?

22 A. The letter was -- was created by -- from
23 boilerplate where most of the letter is similar to any
24 letter such as that termination letter, and that's
25 created by Employee and Management Relations. That

1 was sent to us by Chenise Crump.

2 The details of the letter that Katie would
3 have input -- and I believe Abbey McLennan, again, one
4 of the lead consultants, worked with me and Katie to
5 make sure that that language was appropriate.
6 Finished the letter, sent it back to Chenise Crump for
7 -- for final review.

8 I don't know who Chenise would have -- I
9 don't know if Chenise would have worked with legal to
10 review it or not. Have no idea. But then she sent it
11 back and said it was approved. And that's how that
12 letter was generated.

13 Q. Okay. And so the part that Abbey would have
14 drafted, I'm guessing, says this, "Based upon my
15 review and evaluation of your ability to meet the
16 expectations of this position, specifically your lack
17 of competence at the advanced level, inability to work
18 independently, low work output and your ability to
19 recognize inaccuracies in your calculations and
20 reporting, I have decided to separate you from
21 employment effective January 6, 2020."

22 MS. JOHNSON: Valerie, I just want to
23 object for the record. You said "Abbey." Did you
24 mean to say Katie?

25 MS. BATEMAN: No, I meant Abbey

1 because ---

2 MS. JOHNSON: Okay.

3 MS. BATEMAN: --- I thought he said
4 Abbey worked with him on the letter.

5 Q. (Ms. Bateman) Steve, did you say Abbey
6 worked with you on the letter?

7 A. Abbey worked with both Katie and myself. So
8 Katie would have provided the language that you just
9 recited were the reasons for termination. You know,
10 Abbey would have inserted all of that into the letter.
11 Katie would have reviewed it again. I would have
12 reviewed it. Charletta would have reviewed it.
13 Potentially, more would have reviewed it.

14 And then it was sent back to myself, and I
15 had it. And that's what we presented -- Abbey and I
16 presented that along with Katie during the exit
17 interview to Supriya.

18 Q. So I think you talked earlier about a
19 documentation file that Katie would have created to
20 support her recommendation?

21 A. I don't know if I used the term
22 "documentation file." I do -- I do know that there
23 was plenty of documentation that was provided from
24 Katie to support the termination. And that became
25 part of the record, yes. I guess that's a

1 documentation file.

2 Q. Okay. So where would that documentation be?

3 A. Now?

4 Q. Yes. Well, where was it then? Where was it
5 kept?

6 A. A copy would have been sent to Employee and
7 Management Relations, and then I would have had a copy
8 as well. My copy would have been forwarded to the EOC
9 office when an appeal report came -- or, you know, a
10 request for appeal was submitted by Supriya to
11 employee management relations.

12 I believe the way that happened is the
13 office of legal counsel then contacted my office. I
14 know -- well, and this is even during the pandemic, so
15 I had to go into the office to get it and have it all
16 sent to the office of legal counsel.

17 So I believe, and totally speculation on my
18 part, I believe the office of legal counsel has that
19 record.

20 Q. So there's -- would you agree there's
21 nothing in this letter, though, about lack of
22 emotional intelligence or lack of emotional quotient?

23 A. Yeah. I would agree with that. That wasn't
24 why she was terminated.

25 Q. So she was terminated for the reasons stated

1 in this letter. Is that right?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. And you said that Katie provided plenty of
4 documentation to support those reasons?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Well, did you ever discuss any of -- did you
7 -- let me stop and say that again.

8 Did you ever discuss Supriya with any of the
9 department chairs?

10 A. Not while she was still an employee.

11 Q. How about after she was employed?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. And what were those discussions?

14 A. I was contacted by one department chair, by
15 way of an email, indicating that Supriya had contacted
16 him and sent an email whereby a lot of comments were
17 made about Katie Thornsverd. And that chair wanted to
18 know what to do about that.

19 Q. And who was that chair?

20 A. Kurt Ribisl -- Kurt Ribisl -- Kurt Ribisl,
21 R-u-b-i-s-i-l (sic). His first name is ---

22 Q. And what did you tell him?

23 A. I told him that it was a personnel
24 confidential matter, that any conversation in
25 reference to Supriya should be submitted to my office

1 or forwarded to Employee and Management Relations
2 office as outlined on the termination letter that
3 Supriya had received. I didn't -- I told -- I did not
4 recommend discussing the matter with anyone else.

5 Q. Did he forward you the email she sent to
6 him?

7 A. He did. Did -- I don't know. Did that come
8 through? I was saying yes, Valerie.

9 Q. Yes, I heard you. I heard you.

10 A. Okay.

11 Q. I want to -- I want to share my screen
12 again, so let's -- I have to do several things to do
13 that. So can you see my screen now?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. So is this the email that Kurt forwarded to
16 you?

17 A. Yeah. Could you hold right there?

18 Q. Yeah. Right there?

19 A. Yeah. It's -- it's scrolling so I can't
20 really read it.

21 Q. Okay.

22 (Witness examines document)

23 A. This seems to be more than what I -- I
24 recall. Can we go back up?

25 Q. Yes.

1 A. Yeah. The responses from Kurt, I did not
2 see.

3 Q. Okay. So ---

4 A. The only thing I saw was an email that came
5 from Supriya to Kurt informing him that she had been
6 terminated.

7 Q. So would that be ---

8 A. None of these emails look the same.

9 Q. Would that be this end email down here?

10 (Witness examines document)

11 A. I don't -- I don't think so. My
12 recollection was that there was an email -- it had
13 more to do with Katie than it had to do with prepping
14 work or anything else. This -- this -- I'm not -- I
15 can't be absolutely certain, but I don't think that's
16 the email that Kurt sent me.

17 Q. Okay. Was it -- was it this one, perhaps?

18 (Witness examines document)

19 A. I don't -- I don't think so because the
20 email that Kurt would have forwarded to me, you know,
21 would have had a preface on it about asking what to do
22 or what to say or how to handle. Actually, he was
23 asking for a meeting with me to discuss Supriya.

24 Q. And you told him that you could not discuss
25 it with him?

1 A. No, that's not what I told him. I actually
2 did meet with him.

3 Q. Oh, okay. And you met with him, and what
4 was the discussion?

5 A. That's when I told him that it was a
6 personnel confidential matter, that any -- any future
7 conversation I would recommend either be forwarded to
8 my office or be forwarded to Employee and Management
9 Relations, but we shouldn't be discussing -- we
10 shouldn't be discussing personnel confidential
11 matters.

12 And my recommendation was not to discuss the
13 personnel confidential situation even with Supriya, to
14 forward her to where she has been given guidance to
15 contact if she wants to discuss the matter in further
16 detail. That was the comment -- that was the process
17 I had with Kurt. I also told Dean Rimer the same
18 thing.

19 Q. Say that again.

20 A. I told Dean Rimer the exact same thing, what
21 I just said ---

22 Q. You told Dean Rimer the same thing?

23 A. Yeah. That -- I let Dean Rimer know that
24 Supriya had contacted Kurt and that Kurt had asked for
25 a meeting to discuss that. And then I followed up

1 with Dean Rimer to tell her, "This is the
2 recommendation I'm making about that." I probably
3 said that wrong. I don't tell Dean Rimer what to do.
4 I made a recommendation to her what I thought should
5 be done.

6 Q. So looking at this email here, it's clear
7 that Supriya is telling Kurt that she had no warning
8 whatsoever that her -- that her performance was not
9 strong. Do you see that?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. But your testimony is that's completely
12 inconsistent with your understanding?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. And that she'd never once gotten any
15 warning. Is that correct? That's what she says.

16 A. I don't know what she's talking about in
17 terms of "warning." Was she talking about the ---

18 Q. When she says, "HR" ---

19 A. She'd never once given me a warning?

20 Q. About her work.

21 A. She was given feedback about her work.

22 Q. From whom?

23 A. From Katie.

24 Q. Were you there when Katie gave it to her?

25 A. No. I read the documentation, and I read

1 documentation where she wrote back to Katie in
2 response to what Katie had given to her. So, you
3 know, that's pretty good documentation when it's on
4 the email.

5 Q. Yeah. So this says, "I have over 35 emails
6 documented of her praising me, or blowing me off for a
7 meeting."

8 A. Don't know anything about that. I do know
9 that there are emails that I saw that Katie did give
10 her positive feedback on some of the things that she
11 was doing, especially in the early part of her tenure.

12 She started out really good. She did start
13 out really well. So there were emails even back --
14 you know, I know there are emails back then. I think
15 one of them even talked about Katie telling Dean Rimer
16 that she was doing well. And I think she shared that.

17 But that did not -- it didn't stay that way.
18 That's the problem. That's -- that's what jumped out
19 at us because we -- here we had January, February,
20 March, everything is going well. It seems to be
21 pretty good. Now managers are coming and, you know,
22 not to tell the whole story because we've already done
23 that.

24 But you see what I mean. You had three
25 months where other than that one meeting starting out

1 where Katie told her not to use phrases like "white
2 jerks," I didn't have any information coming to me
3 that there was ever a problem. And I thought
4 everything was going great. And then we started into
5 April, things started to go downhill at that point in
6 time.

7 Q. And when you say, "starting to go downhill,"
8 are you talking about her performance or the emotional
9 intelligence things?

10 A. Both.

11 Q. Okay. But you said she was only terminated
12 for her lack of performance. Is that right?

13 A. Correct.

14 Q. And she says in this email to Kurt that
15 Katie hadn't reviewed a single piece of work for her
16 in months.

17 A. Yeah. The documentation from Katie would
18 not support that comment.

19 Q. Okay. And then she says she got "all good
20 verbal feedback," and that she had "done interactive
21 models" and "over 25 Tableau workbooks" and "dozens of
22 presentations that show your break even points and
23 projections." And then she says, "It's my word
24 against hers."

25 But you're saying that Katie provided emails

1 showing that she had given her negative feedback?

2 A. She had given her feedback on what to
3 correct, which in my mind is not negative. She was
4 trying to help her be successful and -- and learn.

5 Katie, from my estimation, is quite a good
6 teacher when it comes to teaching finance. She's
7 given outstanding presentations in front of high-level
8 people including provosts. And she -- what she could
9 teach me in finance, I was impressed as well because
10 I'm not a particularly good student in finance. But I
11 know what her skills are.

12 And that's how -- you know, she was training
13 all the business manager -- when I first came, there
14 was a big problem with business managers in terms of
15 their competence level. But over time, those people
16 began to leave, and they were replaced with pretty
17 outstanding people.

18 And Katie helped that happen. Because when
19 they came on board, she gave one-on-one training to
20 people to make sure they understood, answered
21 questions. She was -- she was mentoring.

22 I thought she was doing the same thing with
23 Supriya. I -- you know, everything I knew about Katie
24 from the time that I had worked with her, she wants
25 everybody in that finance organization to be

1 **successful.**

2 But she is not going to -- she's not going
3 to accept performance that is not indicative of a
4 high-performance finance organization. She's not
5 going to allow that to happen. And she didn't.

6 Q. So your testimony is that all of these
7 emails that Katie provided you supported her
8 allegations or her -- her argument to you that she had
9 a lack of -- that Supriya had a lack of confidence at
10 an advanced level, was unable to work independently,
11 had low work output and was unable to recognize
12 inaccuracies in her calculations and reporting. Is
13 that right?

14 A. That's -- that's correct.

15 Q. And if I reviewed all those emails that
16 Katie provided you, I would see the support for these
17 reasons for her termination?

18 A. That's correct.

19 Q. Okay. Did any other department chairs,
20 other than Kurt Ribisl, ever come to you and talk
21 about Supriya?

22 A. No. Kurt advised that other department
23 chairs had talked to him after Supriya was terminated.

24 Q. And what ---

25 A. None of that came -- Kurt was speaking on

1 behalf of whoever spoke it. And she -- he didn't give
2 me any details on that.

3 I do believe -- let me think about that.
4 Let me think about that. Oh boy. I can't be certain,
5 but I thought there were emails sent into the
6 organization to both department chairs and to
7 individual employees, both.

8 And when following up on that, I thought
9 that -- yeah, and I think I had talked to Kurt because
10 I think one of the chairs would have been Beth
11 Mayer-Davis, who is the department chair for the
12 nutrition organization at the time -- or, yeah,
13 nutrition department at the time.

14 And there are a number of emails and texts
15 that went out to other employees as well.

16 Q. And you're saying these were all from
17 Supriya?

18 A. Correct.

19 Q. Okay. And they came to you or they came to
20 Kurt?

21 A. I'm only -- well, like I said, the only
22 thing that Kurt showed me was one email. I don't know
23 how -- you're showing me a lot more than what I saw.
24 So evidently, there were more emails.

25 I don't know what emails went to Beth. I

1 was -- I was basically told by at least one employee
2 that she was continuing -- actually, a couple of
3 employees -- continuing to get texts from Supriya
4 basically making comments about Katie being a racist,
5 being a bully, that type of comment.

6 Q. And who was that employee that told you
7 that?

8 A. One was Natiaya Neal. She was the
9 individual that worked down in student services under
10 the guidance of Charletta Sims Evans. Kurt -- let me
11 see. Brent Wishart had indicated that he was
12 continuing to get texts. And I'm -- and I'm certain
13 that people had walked up to Katie to tell her that
14 they were still getting texts.

15 Katie actually came and talked to me about
16 that because she was concerned. Actually, she voiced
17 her concern in the context of her personal safety.
18 And when she did that, we contacted the university
19 police department.

20 MS. BATEMAN: Okay. Can you -- I'm
21 sorry, I need to take just a quick break.

22 (Brief recess: 2:22 p.m. to 2:29 p.m.)

23 MS. BATEMAN: Okay. I am going to show
24 you what I don't think has been marked an exhibit. So
25 I think we will be marking it -- I'm going to look at

1 this folder.

2 THE COURT REPORTER: The next one will
3 be 20.

4 MS. BATEMAN: Yeah. What is the next
5 number?

6 THE COURT REPORTER: 20. The last one
7 you marked was 19.

8 MS. BATEMAN: Okay.

9 THE COURT REPORTER: This one should be
10 Exhibit 20.

11 MS. BATEMAN: Okay. Just give me one
12 sec. Okay. Here we go. I'm going to share my
13 screen.

14 (DEPOSITION EXHIBIT
15 NUMBER 20 WAS MARKED
16 FOR IDENTIFICATION)

17 Q. (Ms. Bateman) So here -- do you see that
18 document, Mr. Regan?

19 A. I do.

20 Q. Okay. It purports to be an email from Beth
21 Mayer-Davis to Supriya. Do you see that?

22 A. I do see it.

23 Q. Okay. "My only suggestion is to talk to
24 Steve Regan although I am assuming you have already."

25 And then I think we're going to go down here

1 to this email. And that's the heading right there.
2 Let me see if I can make this somewhat smaller. I
3 don't want to make it so small you can't read it.

4 A. I can read it.

5 Q. But I'm trying to get more on the screen.

6 A. I see.

7 Q. Okay. So is this the email that you
8 referred to earlier?

9 A. No.

10 Q. No?

11 A. I -- that's to Beth Mayer-Davis. I was
12 referring to an email that Kurt Ribisl sent to me.

13 Q. Oh. I thought you said that there was also
14 an email to Beth.

15 A. Well, I think there was. I think -- you
16 know, you remember I met with Kurt, and Kurt had
17 indicated that emails had gone to other people. And I
18 -- to the best of my recollection was that he had
19 mentioned Beth Mayer-Davis. I didn't see the email.

20 Q. Oh, okay. Okay.

21 A. This must be it though.

22 Q. So Beth never sent you this email?

23 A. No, I don't -- I think the only email I ever
24 got from the business -- or excuse me, from the
25 chairs, from my recollection -- I guess I could be

1 wrong, but I -- I think the only one I got was from
2 Kurt Ribisl. And I haven't seen one yet that looks
3 like the one that he sent me.

4 Q. Okay. So when -- go down to the -- this
5 says, "Hi Michael, Beth," et cetera. Do you see that?

6 A. I do.

7 Q. And then there's a first paragraph, a second
8 paragraph, and if you go down to the third, and it
9 says "I begged HR." Do you see that paragraph? I
10 want you to take a minute and review that paragraph.
11 (Witness examines document)

12 A. Okay.

13 Q. So when she says, "I begged HR to allow
14 Michael, Beth, Morris, or any of the department chairs
15 to please look over my look and have a more objective
16 review of what I did," did she -- are you the HR
17 person she's referring to?

18 A. I don't believe so.

19 Q. Okay. Who else would that be? Would --
20 could that have been Abbey?

21 A. It could be Employee and Management
22 Relations. It -- it could -- you know, at the time of
23 this email, she would have had the termination letter
24 in her hand. And at the bottom of that letter, it
25 says who to contact if you have further issues or

1 **concerns.**

2 Q. Right. But what I guess she's saying in
3 this letter is that she was asking for the decision to
4 terminate her be reconsidered.

5 A. **Yeah, that would be the appeal process.**

6 Q. Okay. So the -- no one in the department
7 would internally review it and say, "Wait, we made a
8 mistake"?

9 A. **What department?**

10 Q. Your department. The Gillings School.

11 A. No one -- no. If you're saying did anybody
12 make a review of the case other than myself and
13 Employee and Management Relations, we also let Dean
14 Rimer know what was going on so that she would not be
15 surprised.

16 All -- all of those people, Dean Rimer,
17 Katie, myself, Abbey and then central HR would have
18 been -- would have been the people involved.

19 But no, there wouldn't be anybody to turn
20 around and say, "Oh, this is a mistake. We're not
21 going to do this." No one did that. You know, we --
22 to my knowledge, I can't think of any reason why they
23 would.

24 Q. Okay. So Katie is talking in this paragraph
25 about her transition from being a -- not a career

1 employee to a -- to a career employee. Is that right?

2 MS. JOHNSON: I'm going to object
3 because you just said, "Katie was talking about."

4 MS. BATEMAN: Sorry. Sorry. Thank
5 you.

6 Q. (Ms. Bateman) Supriya. Supriya is talking
7 about she had -- was a week shy of being made
8 permanent. Do you see that in this paragraph?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Okay. So she was fired for performance
11 reasons, was she not?

12 A. Correct.

13 Q. And if she had been permanent, she would
14 have been required to have gotten two written
15 warnings. Is that correct?

16 A. It's a different process when you are no
17 longer on probation. And it ---

18 Q. So ---

19 A. You know, and it depends on the level of --
20 type of position. Remember we talked about EPA, SPA,
21 et cetera, et cetera. It would -- it would be a
22 different process at that point in time, yes.

23 Q. Okay. So if you're a permanent state
24 employee, you can't be terminated for performance
25 reasons unless you've gotten a written warning or two,

1 right?

2 A. Right. There's a step process through the
3 verbal, written and final termination. That's
4 correct.

5 Q. Okay. But -- but Supriya wasn't entitled to
6 that because she wasn't a permanent employee. Is that
7 correct?

8 A. That's correct.

9 Q. So she didn't get any written warnings about
10 her performance deficiencies. Is that right?

11 A. She didn't get any written warnings from HR
12 or part of HR to do that. She just -- she was just
13 getting feedback on her deficiencies that were
14 documented in the emails from Katie.

15 Q. So you would agree that she never got any
16 written warnings from anyone?

17 MS. JOHNSON: Objection. You can
18 answer.

19 Q. (Ms. Bateman) Would you agree with that,
20 Mr. Regan, that she never got any written warnings
21 about her performance from anyone?

22 A. I think she had written documentation given
23 to her about her performance, yes. She got that
24 from ---

25 Q. From Katie?

1 A. --- from Katie, yes.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. I think that's ---

4 Q. Okay. All righty.

5 MS. BATEMAN: Thank you. That's all
6 the questions I have.

7 MS. JOHNSON: All right. Valerie, just
8 we will allow him to give the name of the employee
9 involved in the inappropriate text matter if we can
10 all agree pursuant to the protective order in this
11 case that if this deposition is filed with the court,
12 that name will be redacted or simplified in such a way
13 that he is not personally -- his name is not
14 personally identifiable.

15 MS. BATEMAN: Yeah. I am -- I am fine
16 with that for the purposes of that one individual.
17 But I had a lot of questions about the investigations
18 that went on and who they involved, and the witness
19 was not willing to speculate or provide me with his
20 recollection of them because it was based on
21 speculation. So I want to hold the deposition open to
22 pursue that.

23 MS. JOHNSON: That's fine. Do you want
24 -- and we'll address that with the Court. But do you
25 want him to give you the name of that employee?

1 MS. BATEMAN: Yeah, that'd be great.

2 MS. JOHNSON: If he knows. I don't
3 even know if he remembers it.

4 Q. (Ms. Bateman) Yes. Do you remember it?

5 **A. The employee that sent the text ---**

6 Q. Yes.

7 **A. --- that was offending? His name is Blair**
8 **Mason.**

9 Q. Okay. And who was he?

10 **A. He was one of the IT technicians.**

11 Q. Okay. And was he one who was present the
12 day that Supriya used the N-word?

13 **A. I do not believe that's true, no.**

14 Q. You don't believe he was there?

15 **A. I do not believe he was there.**

16 Q. Okay. And was an investigation done into
17 whether he sent the text message?

18 MS. JOHNSON: Objection. Already asked
19 and answered.

20 MS. BATEMAN: Well, I'm asking it again
21 because I don't recall that I did ask it and answer --
22 and he answered it.

23 MS. JOHNSON: You can answer, Mr.
24 Regan.

25 Q. (Ms. Bateman) Was an investigation done

1 into whether he sent that text message to Supriya?

2 A. A report was made to the EOC office. The
3 EOC office followed up with Supriya about the matter.
4 Supriya would have confirmed that, you know, that it
5 did occur. And then she also confirmed that she did
6 not want to have any other action taken.

7 MS. BATEMAN: Okay. All right. Thank
8 you.

9 MS. JOHNSON: I have no further
10 questions.

11
12 WHEREUPON, at 02:40 o'clock p.m., the
13 deposition was adjourned.

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CERTIFICATION

Lori Gruber, Notary Public in and for the County of Iredell, State of North Carolina at Large, do hereby certify:

That said witness was affirmed by me to state the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, in said cause and appeared before me, via video conference, at the time and place herein aforementioned and the foregoing consecutively numbered pages are a complete and accurate record of all the testimony given by said witness;

That the undersigned is not of kin, nor in anywise associated with any of the parties to said cause of action, nor their counsel, and not interested in the event(s) thereof.

Reading and signing of the testimony was requested.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 23rd day of February, 2023.

Lori Gruber

CHAPLIN & ASSOCIATES
Notary No. 201919100031

WITNESS CERTIFICATION

I, STEPHEN REGAN, do hereby certify,

That I have read and examined the contents of the foregoing pages of record of testimony as given by me at the times and place herein aforementioned;

And that to the best of my knowledge and belief, the foregoing pages are a complete and accurate record of all the testimony given by me at said time, except as noted on the attached here (Addendum A).

I have ____ / have not ____ made changes/corrections to be attached.

(WITNESS SIGNATURE)

I, _____, Notary Public
for the County of _____, State of
_____, do hereby certify:

That the herein-above named personally appeared before me this the ____ day of _____, 20____;

And that I personally witnessed the execution of this document for the intents and purposes herein above described.

NOTARY PUBLIC

My Commission Expires: _____ (SEAL)

ADDENDUM A

Upon the reading and examination of my
testimony as herein transcribed, I note the following
changes and/or corrections with accompanying reason(s)
for said change/correction:

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